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| UNDP Timor-Leste |
| Mid-Term Evaluation of Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Skills Project in Timor-Leste |
| Mid-Term Evaluation Report  Project ID: 00131204  MTE timeframe: September to 15 November 2024 |
| MTE team member:  Marta Lanzoni, Xperts LLC  November 2024 |

# Project information

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| **Project/outcome Information** | | |
| **Project/outcome title** | Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Skills (YEES) Project | |
| **Project ID** | 00131204 | |
| **Corporate outcome and output** | UNSCDF 2  CPD Outcome No. 1 | |
| **Country** | Timor-Leste | |
| **Region** | Asia-Pacific | |
| **Date project document signed** | 22 July 2022 | |
| **Project dates** | **Start** | **Planned end** |
| 22 July 2022 | 31 December 2027 |
| **Total committed budget** | USD 8,120,947  (USD 7,320,946.67 in Project Document) | |
| **Project expenditure at the time of evaluation** | USD 3,132,127 (39%) | |
| **Funding source** | KOICA  Government of Timor-Leste  UNDP TRAC | |
| **Implementing party** | UNDP, Direct Implementation | |

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| **Evaluation information** | | |
| **Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/country programme, etc)** | External evaluation | |
| **Final/mid-term review/other** | Mid-term evaluation | |
| **Period under evaluation** | **Start** | **End** |
| 22 July 2022 | 15 November 2024 |
| **Evaluators** | Marta Lanzoni, Xperts LLC | |
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|  | 23 September 2024 | 15 November 2024 |

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The evaluation would specifically like to thank the following for their valuable support:

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* Adeline Carrier, UNDP Timor-Leste Deputy Resident Representative
* Hunjai Lee, YEES Project Manager
* Sonia Smith Neto Fernandes, YEES M&E and Communication Officer

# Acronyms

AWP Annual Work Plan

BIC Business Innovation Challenge

BNCTL National Commercial Bank of Timor-Leste

CCI-TL Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI-TL)

CEOP Centre for Employment and Professional Orientation, SEFOPE branches at the municipal level

CES Core Employability Skills

CO Country Office

COVID-19 Coronavirus Disease 2019

CPD Country Programme Document

CV Curriculum Vitae

DIM Direct Implementation Modality

EAP East Asia Pacific

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations

GCF Green Climate Fund

GYBI Generate Your Business Idea

GRES Gender Results Effectiveness Scale

HACT Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer

IADE The Entrepreneurship Development Support Institute

INDMO National Institute for Labor Force Development

ILO International Labor Organization

IOB Institute of Business

IYB Improve Your Business

KOICA Korea International Cooperation Agency

LDC Least Developed Country

LMIS Labor Market Information System

LNOB Leave No One Behind

MCI Ministry of Commerce and Industry

MOF Ministry of Finance

MSMEs Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises

MTCI Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry

MTE Mid-Term Evaluation

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MYSAC Ministry of Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture

NDEE National Directorate of External Employment, SEFOPE

NDIE National Directorate of Internal Employment, SEFOPE

NEET Not in Education, Employment, and Training

NGOs Non-Governmental Organizations

PMU Project Management Unit

POPP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures

PWD Persons with Disabilities

SF School Feeding

SOPs Standard Operational Procedures

KJFL Knua Juventude Fila-Liman

KOICA Korea International Cooperation Agency

SBAA Standard Basic Assistance Agreement

SDGs Sustainable Development Goals

SEA Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

SEEWAY Supporting Employment and Entrepreneurship for Women and Youth

SEFOPE Secretary of State for Vocational Training and Employment

SEIA Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

SEP Self-Employment Programme

SERVE Entrepreneurship Registration and Verification

SFP School Feeding Programme

SH Sexual Harassment

SMEs Small and Medium Enterprises

SYB Start Your Business

TOT Training of Trainers

TRM Tuba Rai Metin

TVET Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UK United Kingdom

UN United Nations

UNCDF United Nations Capital Development Fund

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group

UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization

UNSDCF United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

UNSMS United Nations Security Management System

YEES Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Skills

YIP Youth Internship Program

# Executive summary

1. While Timor-Leste has made significant improvements in living standards for its over 1.3 million population since its independence in May 2002, the country is still dealing with high poverty rates and high unemployment. According to Timor-Leste’s 2021 Labor Force Survey[[1]](#footnote-1), the overall unemployment rate is 5% (5% among men and 6% among women) and the unemployment rate among youth aged 15 to 24 years old is at 10% (7% among men and 12% among women). Moreover, 20% of youth aged 15 to 24 years old are not employed, educated, or trained[[2]](#footnote-2). Job creation is also stifled by limited economic diversity brought about by the economy’s reliance on revenue from natural gas and oil.
2. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is working with the Government of Timor-Leste on the Youth, Employment and Entrepreneurship Skills (YEES) Project, a five-year project that aims to increase youth employment and youth entrepreneurship through skills training, internship, entrepreneurship programs, and capacity-building for service providers that focus on employment facilitation. The project started in July 2022 and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) together provided USD 8.1 million to fund the project.
3. The project’s interventions are framed around two outcomes and 3 outputs. These are:

* Outcome 1: Youth become employed
  + Output 1: Youth obtain skills, competencies, and knowledge to be employed
  + Output 2: Service providers are available to deliver holistic support to enhance employability
* Outcome 2: Youth become entrepreneurs
  + Output 3: Youth, including migrants/returnees, obtain skills, knowledge, and services to start or expand their business

1. The main **objective** **of the mid-term evaluation** is to assess the relevance / coherence, performance, management and governance arrangements and success of the project by identifying developed documents, good practices, lessons learned and make recommendations that the YEES project team might use to improve the design and implementation of the YEES project[[3]](#footnote-3). The mid-term evaluation assesses the project’s theory of change and the Results and Resources Framework outlined in the project document, against the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria to inform project improvement, relevance / coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Given the importance of ensuring a LNOB approach in UNDP’s evaluations and development projects, cross-cutting issues such as gender mainstreaming and social inclusion were addressed separately under a dedicated cross-cutting issues criterion to further enhance the leave no one behind principles and participation of marginalised groups.
2. The **scope of this mid-term evaluation** focuses on project results achieved from inception, July 2022 to October 2024. It evaluates the progress of all three outputs against commitments in the Project Document. To the extent possible it provides an analysis of project interventions in all key districts / municipalities, collected through a wide range of data and interactions with key stakeholders, to guide the formulation of forward-looking recommendations. The implementation of this evaluation was from 23 September to 15 November 2024.
3. Building on the terms of reference, the evaluation team developed a set of key questions that guided the design of the **data collection and methodology for the mid-term evaluation**. [Annex II](#_Annex_II_-) provides the full evaluation matrix with a detailed mapping of the evaluation criteria, the questions against the data sources, indicators, and the data analysis methods that were used during the course of the evaluation. The evaluation comprises mixed methods to assess project progress against outputs, document lessons learned and make recommendations. The analysis of secondary data covers all project areas while the primary data was collected through stakeholder engagement at all levels in Dili, Ermera, and Liquica, through field visits, interviews and focus groups discussions. A nationwide survey was administered to complement other primary data and ensure geographic coverage.
4. The overall **data collection approach** was divided into 3 key phases:

* **Preparatory and inception phase** - through a desk review of project documentation, requirements, and contextual information, the evaluation team outlined the key informants, ways to collect perceptions and evidence, and designed a methodology and implementation plan. This was captured in the inception report.
* **Fieldwork -** data on stakeholders’ perceptions and visible results in project sites was collected during the in-country mission, 6 to 16 October 2024, which included visits to project sites in 3 municipalities. Once analysed, this data provided the basis for the formulation of findings and recommendations. A survey was also conducted in parallel to generate additional insights.
* **Analysis and reporting** - preliminary findings were presented at the end of the fieldwork and following further analysis, the conclusions and recommendations were captured in this mid-term evaluation report.

1. The progress of each indicator was assessed at midpoint and based on the rating system developed by the evaluation team. At the time of this mid-term evaluation, the project was implemented for just over 2 years, but it was measured against year 3 targets as per donor’s guidance. This approach unfortunately highly penalized the project and showed an inaccurate picture of its performance, which did not provide a fair representation of the efforts and progress made by the team in the implementation of the project over the last two years. The review showed that 17% of the indicators were overachieved, 56% of the indicators were partially achieved, and 28% of the indicators were not achieved. Details are provided in [Annex VII.](#_Annex_VI_-)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Output | Number of  indicators | Rating |
| Output 1: Youth obtain skills, competencies and knowledge to be employed | 7 | Overachieved: 2  Partially achieved: 4  Not achieved: 1 |
| Output 2: Service providers are available to deliver holistic support to enhance employability | 4 | Overachieved: 1  Partially achieved: 1  Not achieved: 2 |
| Output 3: Youth, including migrants/ returnees, obtain skills, knowledge, and services to start or  expand their business | 7 | Partially achieved: 5  Not achieved: 2 |

1. The GRES methodology was used to analyse the gender and women’s empowerment performance of the project. In addition, the data collected on project progress and performance against the main evaluation criteria was ultimately assessed against a 4-tier rating scale. The project is rated partially satisfactory overall, with principal findings, ratings and conclusions summarized below.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dimension** | **Performance rating** | **Justification for rating** | **Findings** | |
| Relevance / coherence | Satisfactory - 3 | YEES strategy and its theory of change were highly relevant to the national context, development priorities of the previous and current administration, and the immediate needs of the youths in the country. Relevance was the strongest feature of the project. The project was highly appreciated by national partners, beneficiaries and donors, and the recognized value added was to play a convening role among government actors. However, there was an opportunity to reassess some of the project activities to strengthen internal coherence and enhance the transformative approach to private sector development. | 1. The project’s outcomes were highly relevant to the national priorities, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the DPC and the SDG, withstanding the recent political changes. The relevance dimension was the strongest attribute of the project. 2. The geographical coverage of the project was relevant to the national needs and the project’s overall strategy, but inconsistent across interventions. 3. The project strategy focused on addressing capacity gaps with inconsistent internal coherence and limited efforts placed in addressing structural transformation and long-term private sector development 4. YEES demonstrated strong convening power among government actors, with room to extend coordination with the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem. | |
| Effectiveness | Partially satisfactory - 2 | The project was partially satisfactory in achieving the desired results expected for the first 3 years of implementation, due to an imprecise target setting. The youth internship programme was particularly effective, and the project was making progress in providing youths with skills and seed funds to start or grow their businesses. YEES faced delays in the establishment of systems to provide holistic support to employability. The project did well in identifying risks, but the implementation of the mitigations was incomplete. The transformational impact of the project could not be assessed due to the absence of qualitative data on the jobs and the start-ups. | 1. The project made progress towards its targets, however, the effect of the national elections on the engagement with key counterparts, and an imprecise target setting, affected the perceived effectiveness. 2. YEES has been able to achieve promising results in supporting access to jobs to youth, while showing some agility in the approach. This was found to be the most effective component of the project to date. 3. Career counseling is a critical factor in promoting career development and linkages with the education section can further expand its effectiveness, beyond the empowerment of Youth Centers. 4. The combination of skill development and seed funds was the strongest dimension of entrepreneurship support. This can benefit from targeted focus on enhanced follow up, mentoring, market analysis and linkages across all target locations. 5. Access to finance was a strong feature of the project which may be undermined by institutional delays in the launch of the soft loan scheme. | |
| Efficiency | Partially satisfactory - 2 | The project used its resources as per project document, demonstrating various degrees of efficiency across its interventions. This was further affected by the lack of qualitative parameters in the measurement of project results and the inefficient allocation of project staff capacities to support entrepreneurs. The independent oversight by the project board was characterized by conflict roles among its members. | 1. Project resources were used in alignment with the project document but showed inconsistent degree of efficiency across outputs. 2. Conflicting roles in the project board can challenge the efficiency of the results. 3. Project capacities were not efficiently allocated to provide quality support to entrepreneurs across all project locations. 4. The project M&E framework was designed to measure reach rather than the quality of the interventions and their impact. | |
| Sustainability | Partially satisfactory - 2 | The project has been able to support the implementation of important policy frameworks for SME development and included the formulation of institutional mechanisms to support employment services. However, the long-term impact of the project cannot be assessed due to absence of qualitative metrics to measure knowledge transfer, viability of the start-ups and the integration of ESG considerations in start-up support. The absence of a long-term strategy made it likely that resources may not lead to long-term impact. | 1. Promising indications of institutional sustainability and ownership but required further investments in measuring the impact of the project in the medium to long term. | |
| Cross-cutting | Partially satisfactory - 2 | The project did not effectively mainstream cross-cutting issues in the design and implementation of its interventions. While gender targets were integrated in the project’s ambition and gender mainstreaming integrated in the project results framework, YEES did not integrate gender consideration in outreach and support to women entrepreneurs. The project did not include a focus on social inclusion in its support to youth. Gender mainstreaming was partially satisfactory while the mainstreaming of social inclusion was not satisfactory. | 1. Gaps in gender results and achievements across geographical areas due to the absence of a targeted support to women in accessing employment and throughout the entrepreneurship acceleration approach. 2. The absence of active targeting and a social inclusion strategy affected the ability of the project to measure the reach and impact on those further left behind. | |
| **Overall rating** | **Partially satisfactory - 2** | | |  | |

1. In conclusion, the MTE finds that the YEES project remained highly relevant to Timor-Leste's national and regional priorities and aligned with government strategies, particularly its focus on youth employment and entrepreneurship. The project demonstrated progress in enhancing youth skills, employment opportunities, and entrepreneurial support, with notable successes in soft skills training and the provision of seed funding. However, significant challenges were identified, including internal consistency issues, delays in establishing and implementing systems for holistic support, and gaps in addressing structural barriers to private sector development. Furthermore, the project needed to better incorporate cross-cutting issues like gender and social inclusion through more targeted and strategic efforts.
2. In alignment with the findings, the evaluation proposed a set of recommendations for consideration in the second phase of the project. These are summarized below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Recommendation** | **Priority** | **Responsible entity** | **Timeframe** |
| * + - 1. Revise the internal coherence of the interventions by removing the bakery component, aligning the approach to business acceleration across all sources of funds, and designing an alternative strategy to provide access to finance, should the soft loan witness further delays. *[Finding 2, 3, 9. Output 3 recommendation]* | High | Technical lead by UNDP, in consultation with project stakeholders, and approval by the project board | By mid-2025 |
| 1. Enhance the transformational approach to entrepreneurship development by establishing a limited number of funding windows aligned to selected value chains. These can be supported through targeted support strategies to assist in market and value chain analysis, production skills and mentoring*. [Finding 8, 10, 12. Output 3 recommendation]* | High | Technical lead by UNDP, in consultation with project stakeholders, and approval by the project board | By mid/end-2025 |
| 1. Invest time and resources to enhance the ecosystem approach by building strategic partnerships with private sector partners and companies to establish market linkages and provide support to entrepreneurs. Expand partnerships with schools and universities for career counseling. *[Finding 4, 7, 14. Output 2 and 3 recommendations]* | High | UNDP | By mid/end-2025 |
| 1. Revise the composition of the project board by removing conflicting roles between implementation and oversight. Consider expanding the membership to private sector representatives. *[Finding 11. Overall recommendation]* | High | Technical proposal by UNDP for approval by the Project Board | By mid-2025 |
| 1. Revise the project M&E framework to enhance the qualitative aspect of project impact, and the sustainability of the project. Integrate LNOB results in the results framework. *[Finding 5, 13, 14, 16. Overall recommendation]* | High | Technical proposal by UNDP for approval by the Project Board | By mid-2025 |
| 1. Develop a comprehensive and strategic approach to outreach and engagement of vulnerable and marginalized groups. Strengthen the project targeting strategy by analyzing the barriers to employment / entrepreneurship of the target groups and design an action plan to engage them effectively in project interventions and outreach. Consider leveraging successful experiences from other UNDP projects. *[Finding 16. Overall recommendation]* | High | Technical proposal by UNDP for approval by the Project Board | By end-2025 |
| 1. Effectively manage and mobilize project’s human resources to ensure technical support to entrepreneurs along the prioritized value chains. *[Finding 12, 10. Overall recommendation]* | Medium | UNDP | By mid/end-2025 |
| 1. Mainstream gender and women’s empowerment by developing and operationalizing an inclusive gender action plan to guide efforts in attracting and supporting women through all project’s interventions *[Finding 15. Overall recommendation]* | Medium | UNDP | By end-2025 |

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# Introduction

1. In July 2022, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Timor-Leste partnered with the Government of Timor-Leste to develop and implement the Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Skills (YEES) Project. This project aims to increase youth employment and youth entrepreneurship through skills training, internship, entrepreneurship programs, and capacity-building for service providers. The YEES project is a five-year initiative made possible through joint funding from the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI). The project is a response to high rates of unemployment among youth and women in Timor-Leste.
2. The UNDP’s Policy Guidelines for Evaluation (UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, June 2021) requires mid-term and final evaluation of projects with a planned budget or actual expenditure of more than USD 5 million. In compliance with these guidelines, UNDP Timor-Leste planned to implement an external mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the YEES Project in mid-2025. However, the MTE was decided for early implementation to be able to inform the formulation of the new UNDP Country Programme Document and ensure alignment with the new government’s priorities. A new government in Timor-Leste was elected in July 2023, and this administration identified youth and job creation/economic diversification as a top priority for the country’s sustainable development. This MTE therefore was an opportunity to assess the alignment with the priorities of the new administration and the continued relevance of the project.
3. The objective of the MTE was to assess the relevance / coherence, performance, management and governance arrangements and success of the project by identifying developed documents, good practices, lessons learned and make recommendations that the YEES Project Team might use to improve the design and implementation of the YEES project[[4]](#footnote-4). It assessed the project’s progress against the theory of change and the Results and Resources Framework outlined in the project document, in alignment with the OECD DAC evaluation criteria to inform project improvement. This mid-term evaluation reviewed the progress made by the project across all its components and outputs from its start date in July 2022 until October 2024.
4. As per Terms of Reference, at a strategic level, the mid-term evaluation assessed:
5. To what extent is YEES effective in improving employment/entrepreneurship outcomes for Timorese youth, including key sub-groups? How are different YEES components contributing to outcomes? Is there sufficient evidence to be confident about the efficacy of YEES and its individual components, to suggest scaling up should be considered?
6. What adaptations or changes in approach will be needed to support scalability of more effective approaches, given existing Timorese Government policies, resources, capabilities and systems?
7. How will existing project management arrangements and capacities need to be modified to support scalability?
8. What is the current level of support for YEES from key stakeholders? Does YEES have sufficient support from key stakeholders to consider scaling up?
9. What outstanding questions need to be answered about YEES to support evidence-based consideration of scaling opportunities?
10. This is an external evaluation managed by the UNDP Country Office of Timor-Leste and is aligned with the UNDP evaluation guidelines for project evaluations, with the objective *to improve, continue or scale up an initiative; to assess its sustainability and replicability in other settings; to demonstrate accountability for results; or to consider alternatives.*[[5]](#footnote-5)
11. As per UNDP’s Terms of Reference for this evaluation, the audiences are:

* The Government of Timor-Leste: (a) to support the government in the identification of the project’s best practices and relevant achievements and (b) to scale up the YEES initiatives at broader substantial and operational levels.
* YEES Project Team: (a) to guide the YEES Project Team in the planning and implementation of the second half of the project and (b) to provide valuable inputs to strengthening the project’s management capacity.

1. The report starts with a description of the YEES Project followed by an overview of the evaluation objective, purpose, and scope. The findings are then discussed under the themes of relevance / coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and cross-cutting issues (gender equality, social inclusion, human rights, and other marginalized groups). The MTE will close with a summary of the lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations.

## Context

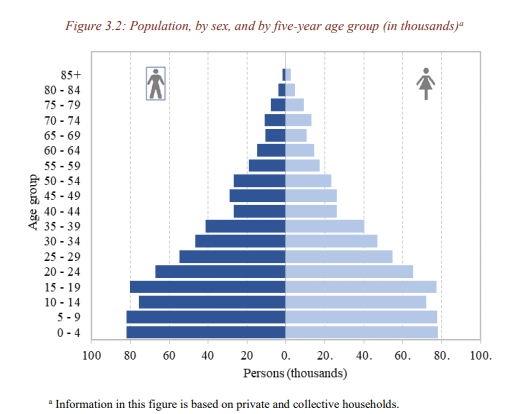
1. Since independence, the country has made significant progress in living standards. With a population of over 1.3 million people, Timor-Leste is a least developed country (LDC) with a lower middle income country status. Its primary revenue comes from natural gas and oil that funds its annual state budget.
2. However, poverty levels remain high with 24% of the population living below the international income poverty line and with 48% of the population who are multidimensionally poor[[6]](#footnote-6). About 65% of the country’s population is under 35 and the majority of the population live in rural areas and are dependent on subsistence agriculture[[7]](#footnote-7). Unemployment rate has halved between 2013 and 2021, from 11% to 5% (4.6% among men and 5.9% among women). Yet, according to Timor-Leste’s 2021 Labor Force Survey[[8]](#footnote-8), in 2021, the unemployment rate among youth aged 15 to 24 years old was close to the double of the national rate, at 9.6% (7.4% among men and 12.4% among women).

Figure 1 – Population by sex and by 5-year age group (in thousands)

2022 Population and Housing Census

1. Despite this progress, the country faces labour underutilization challenges. The labour force participation rate is at 30%, with men (37%) having higher employment rates than women (24%). In comparison, the labor force participation rate in Southeast Asia is 66.1%. This remained stagnant between 2013 and 2021[[9]](#footnote-9), with youth labour force participation three times lower than the national rate. It is estimated that over 20% of youth aged 15 to 24 years old are not engaged in employment, education, or training.
2. Apart from gas and oil, the country has no other substantive sources of income which has led to limited economic diversity that also limits job creation. UNFPA notes that the labour market is unable to provide enough formal jobs for the youth entering the labour market. In 2017, there were 3,605 university graduates in Timor-Leste but only 298 vacancies were advertised online from January to September 2018. Similarly, the 2022 Enterprise and Skill Survey noted that 41% of the vacancies are not advertised and recruitment is pursued through ‘word of mouth’[[10]](#footnote-10). This is partially linked to the limited opportunities (i.e. digital platforms) linking job seekers and employers. Even for digital platforms that do exist, there is limited reach since internet penetration is only 50% of the population[[11]](#footnote-11).
3. The YEES project builds its theory of change in alignment to the findings of the 2017 Enterprise and Skills Survey which noted that the supply of graduates with vocational skills is insufficient to meet the demand. The survey also noted that employers struggle to find qualified workers because of the lack of soft skills among youth that have completed at least secondary school. The skills gap includes IT skills, problem solving skills, ability to work in a team, work ethics, and lack of personal attributes to perform work.
4. UNDP has partnered with the Government of Timor-Leste in the past to address employment and entrepreneurship. In 2021, the Supporting Employment and Entrepreneurship for Women and Youth (SEEWAY) initiative provided internships, soft loans and innovation challenges with the aim to create entrepreneurs among youth and women. Previously, UNDP launched the Knua Juventude Fila-Liman (KJFL) a one-stop centre for youth innovation, employment and entrepreneurship where youth can access e-market and job matching, entrepreneurship support, and a platform to raise their voice and propose solutions. Building on the success of KJFL and SEEWAY, the lessons were scaled up in 2022 under the YEES Project.

## Project description and overview

1. With the 5-year YEES project, UNDP is working with the Government of Timor-Leste to increase youth employment and youth entrepreneurship through skills training, internship, entrepreneurship programs, and capacity-building for service providers. The USD 8.1m project started in July 2022 with the support of KOICA and MCI.
2. The UNDP YEES Project Document defines the theory of change as follows:

*if holistic support through an ecosystem-strengthening approach for entrepreneurship development, including training, incubation, digital technology, marketing, and access to finance, is provided, young men and women can become entrepreneurs and can also create income opportunities for others, especially to marginalised groups and other youth; and if educated young men and women are provided with the required soft skills, have greater access to the right information, enhance their readiness for the work world through internships and technical/vocational training, they will be better prepared with the right skills to match the labour market demands.*

1. The project document did not provide a graphical representation of the theory underpinning the project strategy and the theory of change and the causal attributions were briefly presented. However, the project document provided an analysis of the problem statements that led to the formulation of the interventions and the two main outcomes, which were supported by three outputs. The project was built on two channels of causal attribution. One was related to the provision of soft skills and access to information and internships to match job demand and increase employability. The second was related to the provision of training, incubation, seed funds for equipment, market analysis and access to finance to increase entrepreneurship and stimulate job creation. The lessons learned from previous projects and in-country analysis were used as foundation for these pathways.
2. Underlying assumptions were not made explicit in the theory of change, and there was no analysis on how targeted groups, including women and men, and marginalized groups, were affected differently by the structural and underlying causes. Activities were designed to achieve the expected outputs, which were expected to contribute to the outcomes. Addressing the barriers and the implementation of the causality was expected to lead to the transformative changes presented in figure 2 and reconstructed by the MTE for the project. The assessment noted that the results framework remained unchanged during the project implementation and an exit and sustainability strategy is not explicitly mentioned in the programmatic approach.

A diagram of problem tree and solution

Description automatically generated

Figure 2 – YEES transformation pathways, reproduced from the project document

1. The YEES project results framework is also summarized below, while the indicators are presented in Table 1 below.

* **Outcome 1: Youth become employed**
  1. Output 1: Youth obtain skills, competencies, and knowledge to be employed
  2. Output 2: Service providers are available to deliver holistic support to enhance employability
* **Outcome 2: Youth become entrepreneurs**
  1. Output 3: Youth, including migrants/returnees, obtain skills, knowledge, and services to start or expand their business

1. The main sources of funds for the project are KOICA [USD 5,998,176], Ministry of Commerce and Industry [USD 832,770 and a second contribution of USD 800,000 not reflected in the project document budget nor its results framework], and UNDP [USD 490,000]. While KOICA’s contributions target the entirety of the project and the implementation of its 3 components, MCI’s contribution is only for output 3, entrepreneurship support, and it’s only assigned to activity 3.1, Implementation of entrepreneurship skills development (pre-incubation, incubation, and post-incubation).
2. As per the Project Document, the main project areas are Dili (the capital), Ermera, Liquica, and Baucau. However, there are project beneficiaries in other municipalities, making the project’s geographical span the whole country.



Figure 3 – Timor-Leste and its 14 Administrative Municipalities

1. The project was implemented by UNDP following the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM). It was governed by a Project Board with representatives from UNDP, KOICA, and government agencies such as MCI, MOF, SEFOPE, MYSAC, and IADE. The Board was co-chaired by UNDP and MCI. According to the Project Document, the project management unit was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the project.
2. The implementation of the project benefited from close coordination with a number of stakeholders including government and public agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the business community. Key project partners included the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI), who played a key role as donor and co-chair of the Project Board. SEFOPE and IADE also played an active role in the project board and in contributing to the implementation of the two outcomes. Civil Society Organizations, such as Tuba Rai Metin and Bridge International supported the delivery of outcome 3, with financial literacy trainings and entrepreneurship trainings for young Timorese in Korea. A more detailed mapping of the stakeholders and their role in the YEES project is provided in [Annex IV.](#_Annex_IV_–)
3. The 2022 presidential elections and the 2023 parliamentary elections marked a significant shift to the political landscape that defined the country’s recent history. The transition to the new administration was immediate and led to significant reorganization in the structure and leadership of key government agencies. The incoming administration identified youth, job creation, and economic diversification as development priorities, however the sudden political shift led to significant changes in political appointees, including in key counterparts of the YEES project. This affected the ability of the project to engage key government agencies in the implementation of project interventions in a timely fashion.
4. The YEES project unit was led by a project manager, with support from four national field coordinators, an admin and finance officer, monitoring and communication officer, and technical leads for the two outcomes. At the time of the evaluation, the staffing structure of the project deviated from the project document, and included additional business counselling assistants (4, one in each target municipality) and business development assistants (3, one in each region, Western, Central and Eastern). These changes were made during project implementation as highlighted in the efficiency section of this report.

## Project objectives

1. The YEES Project has two main outcomes: Youth become employed (Outcome 1) and Youth become entrepreneurs (Outcome 2).
2. Outcome 1, Youth become employed, was supported by Outputs 1 and 2. Output 1 was “Youth obtain skills, competencies, and knowledge to be employed”. This included soft skills training module development, soft skills training, and internships. Output 2 was “Service providers are available to deliver holistic support to enhance employability”. This output included the updating of the government online job platform, career counseling training for government personnel, career counseling services, and job fairs.
3. Outcome 2, Youth become entrepreneurs, was supported by Output 3, “Youth, including migrants/returnees, obtain skills, knowledge, and services to start or expand their business”. This included entrepreneurship training (Generate Your Business Idea, Start Your Business, and Improve Your Business), vocational training, soft loans for businesses, market analysis, and support to bakery businesses.
4. The table below provides an overview of the project outputs, and their indicators. A detailed results framework is provided in [Annex VIII](#_Annex_VI_-)

*Table 1 – Overview of YEES results framework*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Output** | **Indicator** |
| **Output 1:** Youth obtain  skills, competencies and  knowledge to be employed | 1.1.1 Soft skills training modules are fully developed  (Number of developed modules) |
| 1.2.1 Number of SSYS, SEFOPE, YEES personnel, and other relevant government personnel in Dili and municipalities who are trained and actively provided soft skills training |
| 1.3.1 Number young women and men who completed soft  skills training (50 % female) |
| 1.3.2 Number of youth with improved soft skill |
| 1.4.1 Number of internship hosting institutions (employers) |
| 1.4.2 Number young women and men who are placed in  internships (50 % female) |
| 1.4.3 Percentage of interns who complete their internship |
| **Output 2**  Service providers are available to deliver holistic support to enhance employability | 2.1.1 Information platforms connecting jobseekers to potential employers is fully functional  (Number of information platform users) |
| 2.2.1 Number of SSYS, SEFOPE, YEES personnel, and other relevant government personnel in Dili and municipalities who is trained and actively provided job and career guidance services |
| 2.2.2 Number of youth beneficiaries who received services to enhance job readiness |
| 2.3.1 Establishing partnership between job seekers and providers  (Number of visitors registered for job fairs) |
| **Output 3**  Youth, including migrants/returnees, obtain skills, knowledge, and services to start or expand their business | 3.1.1 Number of young men and women who completed GYBI (Generate Your Business Idea) training (40% female) |
| 3.1.2 Number of young men and women who completed SYB (Start Your Business) training (40% female) |
| 3.1.3 Number of young men and women who got additional vocational training to start their business |
| 3.1.4 Number of trainees who set up their enterprises or already have start-ups, completed IYB (Improve Your Business) training |
| 3.2.1 Number of new start-ups or existing start- ups that apply for soft loans from BNCTL (50 % female-owned businesses) |
| 3.3.1 Frequency of dissemination of information on trainings, resource availability, and market analysis |
| 3.4.1 Number of bakery entrepreneurs, employees and children benefited from bakery business |

# Evaluation objective, purpose and scope

## Evaluation scope

1. The YEES project was a five-year initiative, and this evaluation focused on project results achieved from inception, July 2022 to October 2024. It evaluated the progress of all three outputs against commitments in the Project Document. The analysis of secondary data covered all project areas while the primary data collection included Dili, Ermera, and Liquica. The survey administered to complement primary data had nation-wide coverage. To the extent possible, it provided an analysis of project interventions in all key districts / municipalities, collected through a wide range of data and interactions with key stakeholders, to guide the formulation of forward-looking recommendations. The period of evaluation implementation was from 23 September to 15 November 2024.

## Evaluation objectives

1. The main objective of the mid-term evaluation was to assess the relevance / coherence, performance, management and governance arrangements and success of the project by identifying developed documents, good practices, lessons learned and making recommendations that the YEES project team might use to improve the design and implementation of the YEES project. The mid-term evaluation reviewed the project’s progress against the theory of change and the Results and Resources Framework outlined in the project document, against the OECD DAC evaluation criteria to inform project improvement.
2. The specific objectives in the Terms of Reference for the MTE were:
3. **Establish result-based evaluation framework:**
   1. Assess the coherence and logic of the project's design and whether it is still valid within the current economic, political and development circumstances in Timor-Leste.
   2. Assess the project design in terms of its relevance to the overall development situation at the national level, relevance to national strategies, and relevance to beneficiaries.
   3. Identify baselines, benchmarks, risks and assumptions.
   4. Assess performance of the project in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, and timeliness of producing the expected outputs; including the progress made towards achieving its long-term and medium-term outcomes.
   5. Assess the effectiveness of the project's theory of change in achieving the defined outcomes.
4. **Evaluate and report on progress and results:**
   1. Assess the quality and timeliness of inputs, the reporting and evaluation system and extent to which these have been effective.
   2. Assess relevance of the project’s management arrangements and identify bottlenecks.
   3. Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the project structure in regard to the outputs of each of the project components.
   4. Track and analyse progress towards the achievement of the agreed outcomes of the project.
5. **Assess efficiency of resource use:**
   1. Assess the likelihood of sustainability of the interventions.
   2. Identify constraints, failures, achievements, and best practices and propose recommendations to make adjustments to ensure the achievement of the outcomes within the remaining lifetime of the YEES project.
   3. Analyse the inclusiveness and “leave no one behind” strategy of the project, especially women, people with disabilities and people living in remote areas.
6. **Document good practices and lessons learned:**
   1. Analyse underlying factors beyond UNDP control that affected the achievement of the project outcomes.
   2. Identify good practices and lessons learned.
   3. Elaborate recommendations to improve project performance (management, implementation, efficiency, impact results, performing indicators).
7. A particular focus of the evaluation was the extent to which UNDP’s support was relevant to the country’s needs and how this can be improved. With the project going through a review, the evaluation was expected to help inform possible course corrections to improve project performance, efficiency and effectiveness.

## Evaluation criteria and evaluation questions

1. As per terms of reference, selected OECD DAC evaluation criteria of i) relevance / coherence, ii) effectiveness, iii) efficiency, and iv) sustainability were used as the overarching framework for the mid-term evaluation of the project. Given the importance of ensuring a LNOB approach in UNDP’s evaluations and development projects, cross-cutting issues such as gender mainstreaming, and social inclusion were addressed separately under a dedicated cross-cutting issues criterion to further enhance the leave no one behind principles and participation of marginalised groups.
2. The evaluation criteria underpinning the evaluation methodology were built on the key questions provided in the ToR for the MTE (see [Annex](#_Annex_I_–) I). The strategic level guidance for the design of the detailed evaluation questions and criteria include:

* To what extent is YEES effective in improving employment/entrepreneurship outcomes for Timorese youth, including key sub-groups? How are different YEES components contributing to outcomes? Is there sufficient evidence to be confident about the efficacy of YEES and its individual components, to suggest scaling up should be considered?
* What adaptations or changes in approach will be needed to support scalability of more effective approaches, given existing Timorese Government policies, resources, capabilities and systems?
* How will existing project management arrangements and capacities need to be modified to support scalability?
* What is the current level of support for YEES from key stakeholders? Does YEES have sufficient support from key stakeholders to consider scaling up?
* What outstanding questions need to be answered about YEES to support evidence-based consideration of scaling opportunities?

1. Building on the above, the objectives and the detailed perspective stated in the ToR, the evaluation team developed a set of detailed sub-questions that guided the detailed design of the data collection and methodology for the MTE. The detailed methodology is provided in the evaluation matrix in [Annex II,](#_Annex_II_-) and below is an overview of the key sub-questions underpinning the evaluation data collection methodology.

*Table 2 – Evaluation criteria and sub-questions*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evaluation criteria** | **Sub questions** |
| **Relevance / coherence -**  The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to global and national needs, policies and priorities and those of beneficiaries and partner institutions and continue to do so as circumstances change. | To what extent is the YEES project aligned to the national development priorities, the SDGs, UNDP’s Strategic Plan, and CPD/UNSDCF for Timor-Leste and the economic, political and institutional changes that have occurred during the project timeline? |
| Has the project design included soundly formulated intervention logic, outputs, inputs, and indicators with relevant baselines, risks and assumptions to achieve its defined outcomes? |
| How relevant was the project design, approach and geographical coverage of the project for scalability of results? |
| To what extent does the project complement and leverage other UNDP projects in the country? |
| To what extent does the project align and complement and leverage similar interventions by other development actors, both in thematic areas of the project and the geographical areas? |
| **Effectiveness -** The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across women and men, youth, people with disabilities and other groups. | To what extent were the project results achieved, and activities implemented as per intended outputs and targets set out in the project document? |
| How effective was the project in contributing to the employment and entrepreneurship of youth of all genders in Timor-Leste? |
| What factors, systems, and mechanisms have contributed to achieving or not achieving the intended results? How effective was the identification and management of risks? |
| **Efficiency -** The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way. | How efficiently were the resources, including human, material and financial, used to achieve the above results in a timely manner? To what extent has the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective (e.g. value for money)? |
| To what extent is the existing project management structure including monitoring/quality assurance and results framework appropriate and efficient in generating and measuring the expected results? |
| How effective were the project’s management arrangements in overseeing project performance and ensuring the independent and impartial assurance of project results? |
| To what extent is the project M&E framework and the data collected to monitor results effective in measuring results and includes disaggregated data by gender, ethnic group, disability, etc.? |
| **Sustainability** - The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue. | To what extent are the planned results of the project likely to be durable and can be maintained or even scaled up and replicated by UNDP and/or other partners? |
| To what extent do project interventions have a well-designed and planned sustainability and scaling up strategy? What could be done to strengthen the project’s sustainability and scaling up strategy? |
| **Cross cutting issues -** The extent to which the project objectives and design integrates gender equality, social inclusion, human rights, people with disabilities, and other marginalised groups. | To what extent was the project approach effective in promoting social inclusion - particularly focusing on the marginalised and the poor? Were these groups consulted and meaningfully involved in project design, planning and implementation? |
| To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project? |
| To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in differently abled people? Were these groups consulted and meaningfully involved in project design, planning and implementation? What barriers did they face? |

## Evaluation approach

1. The mid-term evaluation used an integrated approach with a **mixed method approach**. More specifically, the evaluation adopted a summative approach to assess the contributions of the project to the planned results and outputs. This was also used to discuss project’s progress and result, and the degree of achievement of the results framework. In addition, the MTE used a feedback driven formative approach that assisted in identifying relevant learnings and lessons, while ensuring the relevance of the observations. Through a collaborative approach, the evaluation closely consulted the project team and key relevant stakeholders affected by the project or involved in its implementation, in collecting insights, perspectives and views on YEES.
2. The approach is divided into three key phases:

* **Preparatory and inception phase** - through a desk review of project documentation, requirements, and contextual information, the evaluation team outlined the key informants, ways to collect perceptions and evidence, and designed a methodology and implementation plan. This included an initial briefing session with UNDP Timor-Leste once the contract was signed, which was used to define the detailed evaluation sub-questions and begin the detailed desk review.
* **Fieldwork -** data on stakeholders’ perceptions and visible results in project sites were collected during the in-country mission which was fielded between 6 and 16 October 2024. This included field visits to YEES targeted municipalities, where interviews with key stakeholders took place and activities were observed. Stakeholder interviews took place during this phase through semi-structured interviews and as per guiding questions prepared ahead of the data collection phase. A survey was also conducted during this phase. The data collection phase ended on 18 October, with the end of the field work and the collection of the survey responses.
* **Analysis and reporting** - preliminary findings were presented at the end of the fieldwork, on 16 October 2024, to UNDP Timor-Leste senior management. Following the synthesis analysis which took place between 21 October and 1 November, the conclusions and recommendations were captured in the draft report submitted on 4 November.

## Evaluation methods

1. The evaluation leveraged the most appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods and tools to answer the selected evaluation questions. However, given the time constraints, the evaluation methods focused largely on qualitative assessments, with quantitative data being gathered and analysed from secondary data. These methods included participatory and gender responsive evaluation approaches, analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, and the triangulation of the findings. A detailed overview of the methods applied through the evaluation are provided in the evaluation matrix in [Annex II.](#_Annex_II_-)
2. Data sources for the MTE included both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data incorporated qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, direct observation, and a survey on beneficiary perception and satisfaction. Secondary data included project documents and quantitative data on the YEES project design, implementation, and its progress and outputs to date. Relevant analysis on the country context, youth entrepreneurship, articles, journals, grey literature, as well as UNDP, KOICA and other partners’ strategies, priorities and interventions were also reviewed.
3. The evaluation used a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach for data analysis. The data was categorised and grouped based on the evaluation questions and on similarities raised by respondents to identify recurring themes and pivotal issues of significance for the evaluation. This was triangulated against primary data sources through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and survey responses. Snowballing interviews and other techniques were used to further gather evidence to validate preliminary findings or in the absence of sufficient data.
4. Several stakeholders were selected through **non-statistical sampling methods** on the basis of evaluation questions. The stakeholders mapping is available in [Annex IV](#_Annex_IV_–) and these were divided into:

* **Implementers** - entities that directly implemented project activities and interventions and reported on the results they have achieved through the project results.
* **Donors -** entities providing the resources required for the achievement of the project’s planned results.
* **Board members -** entities engaged in independent oversight of the project’s quality and performance, in line with the project document and the expected results.
* **Beneficiaries -** entities that directly benefited from the results of the project. These can be primary and/or secondary.
* **Key partners -** entities consulted, informed, formally or informally engaged in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the interventions.

1. A white background with black text

   Description automatically generatedThe evaluation interviewed over 100 stakeholders, via semi-structured interviews and focus groups discussions across a range of organizations. The list of KIIs and FGD participants by organization type is provided in table 3. In addition, 112 survey responses were received across all targeted stakeholders.
2. The evaluation approach included a **calibrated sampling of stakeholders** based on their role in the project, to ensure the integration of a variety of geographical, sectoral, social and economic perspectives. Beneficiary representatives consulted through FGDs, semi-structured interviews, and direct observation were sampled on the basis of a number of factors, such as gender, business sectors and livelihoods activities, project target areas, age, and level of success. This approach aimed at ensuring a wide representation of project beneficiaries and to cover a comprehensive number of project activities. Throughout the evaluation, interviews and discussions ensured the participation of women and included probing questions on the project’s approach to gender and social inclusion. This included women only discussions, where possible.

Table 3 – Interviewees by organization type

1. The evaluation methods were designed to capture the different experiences and impact by gender. This included the inclusion of women and power dynamics based on gender in the design of the project strategy, and the implementation of the project. It also included an analysis of the effectiveness of project interventions on all genders, including their empowerment, as well as the ability of the project to monitor and measure gender results and differences. This was achieved by integrating gender lenses in the design of evaluation questions, particularly the dedicated gender criterion under cross-cutting issues and by incorporating these questions in semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The analysis of secondary data included a gender and social inclusion perspective, the survey integrated gender and women’s empowerment specific questions, and consultations were organized with people of different sex, using probes to enhance the depth of the discussions.
2. The evaluation conforms with the 2020 United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) ethical guidelines. Accordingly, the evaluation team was responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethical conduct at all stages of the evaluation cycle. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting the privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of stakeholders (the evaluators have the obligation to safeguard sensitive information that stakeholders do not want to disclose to others), ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) ensuring appropriate and inclusive representation and treatment of the various stakeholder groups in the evaluation process (and that sufficient resources and time are allocated for it), and ensuring that the evaluation results create no harm to participants or their communities. The pledge on the ethical conduct of the evaluation is provided in [Annex XI.](#_Annex_XI_-)
3. During the inception phase and the field mission phases, the evaluation prioritised reliability by utilising robust data collection and analysis techniques, ensured the security of collected information, used data exclusively for this evaluation, provided credible and reliable information, adhered to fundamental principles of impartiality, independence and aimed at creating an environment of trust and cooperation.

## Data collection

1. During the first two phases of the process (preparatory and inception, and field work), the evaluation collected and reviewed a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data sources to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the evaluation questions and building on existing and new information.
2. **Secondary data** about the YEES project design, implementation and its progress and outputs to date was largely collected during the desk review phase which guided the collection of largely quantitative data. In this first phase, the evaluation team reviewed available information and cross-referenced its findings with the UNDP Country Office and the project team to generate tables and quantitative project information. This included a review of project reports and monitoring data, which was collated to inform and further refine the design of the semi-structured interviews, the sampling of the stakeholders and site visits. This allowed the MTE to verify project generated data through the collection of primary data during the field work. In this phase, analysis on the country context, youth entrepreneurship, articles, journals, grey literature, as well as UNDP and partners’ strategies, priorities and interventions were analysed. See [Annex VII](#_Annex_VII_-_1) for a list of secondary data pertaining to the project.
3. **Primary data**, mainly qualitative information, were collected by engaging with stakeholders in Dili, Ermera, and Liquica from 7 to 16 October 2024 during the field work. These engagements were conducted through a number of data collection tools all tailored in line with the evaluation guiding questions, and as per overview provided in [Annex II](#_Annex_III_-)I. These were further tailored for each stakeholder group, to ensure relevance but also alignment of the interviews with the evaluation criteria and its methodology.
4. The primary data collection tools included:

* **Key Informants Interviews (KIIs)** for stakeholders identified as high priority and with a significant role in the implementation, oversight, or directly benefiting from the YEES project. The informants included a balance between government entities, youth and entrepreneurs, potential employers, responsible parties, and key formal and informal partners, across 3 municipalities, Dili, Ermera and Liquica.
* **Project Perception Survey** collected additional data on stakeholders’ perception on the project, its progress, and results to date. The survey was administered through Google Forms and targeted direct YEES beneficiaries (youth, entrepreneurs, and potential employers). The survey was first drafted in English with the final version translated into the local language and back to English with the support of the CO. The survey played a critical role in supporting the validation and triangulation of data gathered from a range of documentation, KIIs, FGDs, and published stories. Survey dissemination was sent through an email by the Country Office to all beneficiaries and the total number of respondents was 112 beneficiaries.
* **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** were used to assess the perception of key beneficiaries on the project and its progress and preliminary results along the key project components. These include:
  1. Youth placed in internships and/or who receive career counselling,
  2. Potential employers engaged in job fairs and/or received interns,
  3. Winners of the Business Innovation Challenge (BIC),
  4. Winners of the Seed Fund Initiative, and
  5. Beneficiaries of the grant / loan scheme.
* **Direct observation** of project results at sites was crucial during the fieldwork. These included visits to start-ups receiving support from the project and direct observation of project results in Dili, Ermera, and Liquica.

## Analysis of the findings and triangulation

1. During the analysis and reporting phase, the data collected through a range of primary and secondary sources was analysed via quantitative and qualitative approaches, in line with the evaluation matrix and its guiding questions. This analysis was done in several ways. Quantitative analysis collected through secondary data was processed through MS Excel and triangulated through sampling several sources. For the analysis of qualitative data, several mechanisms were used. Data gathered through the field work was analysed as the evaluation unfolded, through notes and daily analyses, which led to a snowball effect. Preliminary and emerging findings were drawn out and verified in the following interviews for verification and reinforcement. In addition, a thematic approach and a content analysis tool was also used through coding. The evaluation also assessed the results against the targets set in the project results framework against a numerical 5-point scale to review the progress against the project expectations. With these complementary analytical approaches, responses were categorised and grouped based on the evaluation questions and on similarities raised by respondents to identify recurring themes and pivotal issues of significance for the evaluation.
2. Data cleaning, synthesis, analysis, and triangulation across data sets were used to ensure the validity and reliability of the evidence-based findings. Triangulation was used to compare primary information collected across KIIs, focus group discussions, observations, and survey responses with the information documented. Given the time limitations, the time in-country was maximized by interviewing a significant number of beneficiaries and stakeholders to allow for an ongoing triangulation of findings. Throughout the field work and the consultations, the evaluator asked the same questions to several sources and probed in relation to the evaluation criteria to ensure the triangulation of data. Data was included in the evaluation report when confirmed by three or more stakeholders or documented evidence. This method ensured that data from a diverse set of stakeholder groups were cross-referenced to identify recurring themes and validate evidence from project reports. Some issues could not be physically verified by the evaluators and are accepted at face value. These include performance data (exact number of beneficiaries trained, participants to job fairs, etc.), financial reports, and purchase, installation and operation of hardware and software in all youth centers. Two debriefs were organized with UNDP staff, one midway through the field work and one at the end of the mission. These were used as an opportunity for UNDP to ask questions and raise concerns. This further contributed to identifying further interviewees and increase interview snowballing.
3. Data collected on project progress and performance against the main evaluation criteria was ultimately assessed against the rating scale provided in table 4 below. The rating of each evaluation category is provided in each section of the report and reported in the conclusion section of the MTE.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Performance rating scale** | |
| Excellent – 4 | Performance fully meets or exceeds expectations formulated in the UNDP project results frameworks, rules and regulations and applied good practice |
| Satisfactory – 3 | Performance fully meets overall expectations formulated in the UNDP project results frameworks, rules and regulations and applied good practice, with only few weaknesses |
| Partially satisfactory – 2 | Performance partially meets overall expectations formulated in the UNDP project results frameworks, rules and regulations and applied good practice, but has significant weaknesses. |
| Not satisfactory – 1 | Performance does not meet overall expectations formulated in the UNDP project results frameworks, rules and regulations and applied good practice |
| Not evaluated - 0 | Performance could not be evaluated. This may be due to a lack of data or unclear performance objectives or expectations. |

Table 4 – Performance rating scale applied to YEES project

1. In addition, the midterm evaluation conducted a Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES) analysis of project results as per UNDP evaluation guidelines[[12]](#footnote-12) and categories provided in figure 4. This analysis was conducted against the results observed and the data harvested through the data collection phase. This analysis is provided in the cross-cutting section of this report, under gender equality and women’s empowerment. To analyse the project results, the evaluation reviewed the results in five key project areas: i) employable skills and experience, ii) institutional coordination and information system, iii) entrepreneurship skills, iv) access to finance (loans), v) market research. Each result in these areas was scored against the GRES scale and average values were reported by project area.

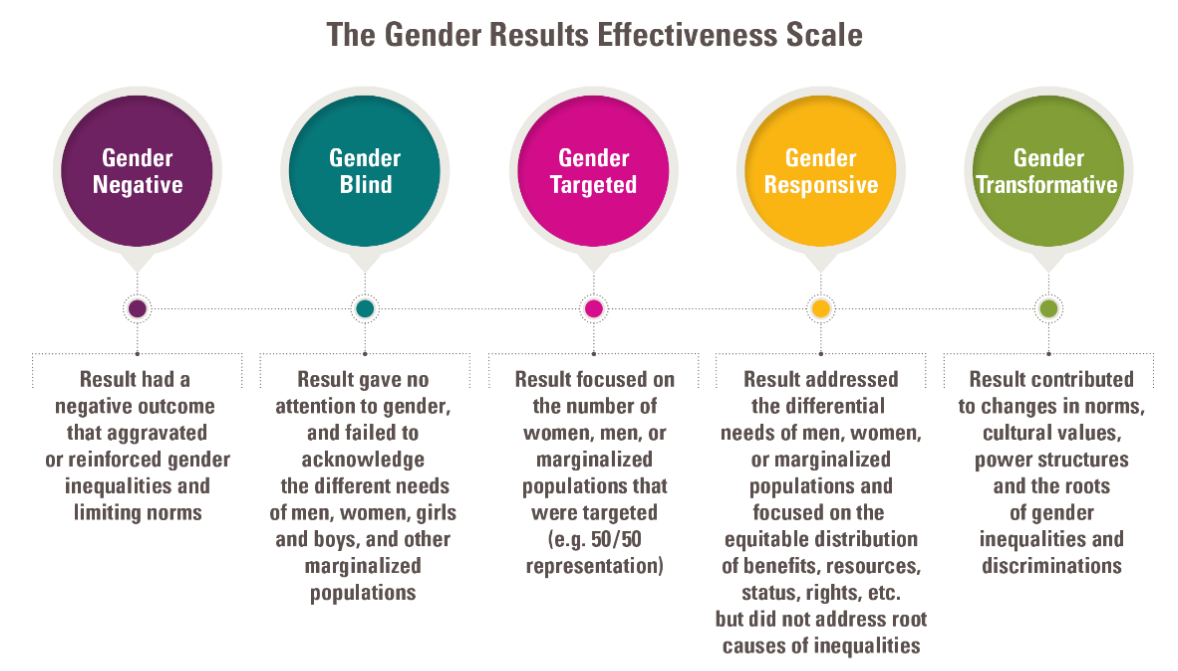


Figure 4 – GRES categories, as per UNDP IEO guidance

## Constraints and limitations

1. **Data availability:** The project started in July 2022, with 2 years of implementation at the time of the MTE and delays in a number of activities. With this, there was the risk of limited availability of data to effectively assess the contribution the project is making to promoting youth entrepreneurship and employment in the country. This was mitigated by giving emphasis to stakeholders’ perceptions and analysis of the progress the project was making towards its planned results, as presented in the project document.
2. **Geographic Constraints:** While the secondary data included data from all project areas, primary data collected only covered three out of the four main projects areas. The areas covered in primary data collection are Dili, Ermera, and Liquica. To mitigate this limitation, a nation-wide survey was circulated covering all project interventions and this data was used to extract information on all project locations.
3. **Time Constraints**: The evaluation took place in a very condensed timeline, which affected the ability to create case studies and to translate survey responses in time for the report writing. To mitigate this possibility, the analysis included survey results from scale-based answers. Selected comments from the respondents were translated to provide better context, but some qualitative comments were translated through online translation systems and not proofread by native speakers in time for analysis. The evaluator aimed at increasing the number of stakeholders consulted during the in-country visit to collect primary data. In addition to survey respondents, over 100 stakeholders were consulted through focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews to ensure a diverse and comprehensive perspective on the project.
4. **Disability:** The evaluation was not able to assess the integration of people with disabilities in the effectiveness and cross-cutting dimensions of the evaluation as this approach was not actively implemented during the project. Although the signed UNDP project document made a vague reference to disability, there were no specific targets in the project results framework related to the mainstreaming of this issue, and no targeted efforts were put in place to strengthen the inclusion of this group.
5. **Coherence:** This dimension was not included in the MTE ToR. In an effort to develop a comprehensive analysis, the MTE integrated the coherence dimension into the first evaluation criterion of relevance. The focus of the analysis was largely on the external coherence of YEES with other UNDP interventions and partners’ efforts.

# Findings

1. This section is organized in alignment with the evaluation criteria: relevance / coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence sustainability, and cross cutting issues. Each section begins with the overview of the key evaluation questions, further defined in the evaluation matrix in [Annex II.](#_Annex_II_-)

## Relevance / coherence

* To what extent is the YEES project aligned to the national development priorities, the SDGs, UNDP’s Strategic Plan, and CPD/UNSDCF for Timor-Leste and the economic, political and institutional changes that have occurred during the project timeline?
* Has the project design included soundly formulated intervention logic, outputs, inputs, and indicators with relevant baselines, risks and assumptions to achieve its defined outcomes?
* How relevant was the project design, approach and geographical coverage of the project for scalability of results?
* To what extent does the project complement other UNDP projects in the country? To what extent does the project align and complement similar interventions by other development actors, both in thematic areas of the project and the geographical areas?

**Finding 1:** **the project’s outcomes were highly relevant to the national priorities, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the CPD and the SDG, withstanding the recent political changes. The relevance dimension was the strongest attribute of the project.**

**Rating: Satisfactory – 3**

**Justification for rating:** YEES strategy and its theory of change were highly relevant to the national context, development priorities of the previous and current administration, and the immediate needs of the youth in country. Relevance was the strongest feature of the project. The project was highly appreciated by national partners, beneficiaries and donors, and the recognized value added was to play a convening role among government actors. However, there was an opportunity to reassess some of the project activities to strengthen internal coherence and enhance the transformative approach to private sector development.

1. The YEES project was highly relevant to the overall objectives stated in the country’s Strategic Development Plan 2011 – 2030:

* By 2030 Timor-Leste will have joined the ranks of upper middle-income countries, eradicated extreme poverty and established a sustainable and diversified non-oil economy.
* By 2030, the strong bond between Timorese people and the environment will be restored and our natural resources and our environment will be managed sustainably for the benefit of all.

1. It was also particularly aligned to specific sectorial priorities:

* **RURAL DEVELOPMEN**T: The creation of local jobs is the best way to improve the lives and livelihoods of people living in rural areas.
* A diagram of a company's employment strategy

  Description automatically generated**INVESTMENT:** To build our nation and provide jobs and income for our people, we will attract investors to our key industry sectors, partner with international firms in building our infrastructure and support local firms to start-up and grow.

Figure 5 – The three pillars of the Timor-Leste National Employment Strategy 2017-2030

1. The project was also fully aligned to all 3 pillars (see figure 5) of the country’s National Employment Strategy 2017-2030 which aims to “generate productive employment opportunities for the Timorese population, reducing unemployment and transitioning to formal employment opportunities, as a central means of nation building and wealth creation”.
2. YEES was aligned to the ‘Technical and Vocational Education and Training Plan 2011-2030’ (TVET Plan) which offered over 60 recommendations for the seven essential elements including the following:

* Creating an environment to encourage small enterprise development and innovation.
* Pilot the establishment of an Industry Skills Development Centre.
* Introduction of incentives for business investment in skills development and jobs.

1. The project directly contributed to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Timor-Leste and the UNDP Country Programme Document, specifically:

* **United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2:** By 2025, institutions and people throughout Timor-Leste in all their diversity, especially women and youth, benefit from sustainable economic opportunities and decent work to reduce poverty.
  + **Outcome indicator 2.3.1:** Percentage of youth (15-24) not in education, employment or training (Sustainable Development Goals – SDG indicator 8.6.1).
  + **Outcome indicator 2.1.2:** Share of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex (SDG indicator 8.3.1).
* **UNDP Country Programme Document Output 1.1.** Young men and women have improved access to sustainable economic opportunities.
* **UNDP Country Programme Document Output 1.2.** Vulnerability to multidimensional poverty reduced and livelihood opportunities increased, especially among rural/coastal communities

1. YEES was also contributing to the SDG, particularly SDG 8 and its indicators 8.3.1 and 8.6.1.
2. Consultations with stakeholders confirmed that the priorities of the project, and its focus on the creation of employment and economic opportunities for youth continue to be a critical priority of the new administration. The 9th Constitutional Government prioritized job creation, promotion of entrepreneurship and stimulation of creativity, innovation and diversification of the national economy in its Programme. Recognising the importance of youth in the consolidation of national unity, the new administration aimed to provide education, health and vocational training to young people to empower them to become the future leaders and contribute to the sustainable development of the country. The YEES project therefore remained firmly relevant to the priorities of the country and the new administration.

**Finding 2:** **the geographical coverage of the project was relevant to the national needs and the project’s overall strategy, but inconsistent across interventions.**

1. As per the strategy in the Project Document, the project targeted 4 key municipalities (Dili, Ermera, Liquica, and Baucau). These were selected by looking at a number of criteria. For instance, these were the four municipalities with the highest population density by square kilometer in the country, including the 3 most populous municipalities as per 2015 census and a significant presence of youth in the 15-34 age group. These target areas saw the institutional presence of SEFOPE, IADE and MEYS and the presence of other UNDP’s projects also promoting employment opportunities, which were considered particularly favorable conditions for the selection of target municipalities. It was found that these criteria and the 4 municipalities fully aligned to the overall needs of the country and the opportunity to contribute to the promotion of employment and entrepreneurship of the younger age groups.
2. However, the geographical coverage of the project changed in relation to the sources of funds. Interventions funded by KOICA focused on 4 key municipalities, while MCI’s funded interventions had nationwide coverage. This was found to generate a degree of inconsistency with the strategy proposed in the Project Document as well as the way the project was communicated to stakeholders. This in turn can affect the efficiency in the distribution of project staff and technical capacities across the country (see also Finding 11), as well as the overall effectiveness of the project.
3. The project strategy was defined through a theory of change (as analysed in the project description) and was found to be very relevant to the needs of the country. This built clearly on the results and the lessons learned by UNDP through the implementation of two previous projects, Supporting Entrepreneurship for Women and Youth (SEEWAY) Project and the Knua Juventude Fila-Liman (KJFL) project. These lessons were captured in an analysis that fed the formulation of YEES project strategy and theory of change. The strategy also aligned to UNDP’s approach to entrepreneurship development piloted by the Regional Co:Lab, a regional initiative managed through the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub and supporting UNDP offices in the Asia-Pacific region in empowering youth and entrepreneurs. These regional efforts and the lessons learned across the region were integrated into the YEES theory of change.
4. Similarly to YEES, the SEEWAY project was also organized around two components, one in support of internship placements and one to promote entrepreneurship through innovation challenge and skill development, and access to finance. The design was deemed effective by the then Ministry of Commerce and Industry and ultimately scaled into a national programme of entrepreneurship development, building on national systems and resources. The YEES project therefore scaled SEEWAY’s approach with the support of KOICA for all 3 outputs, and MCI only for one specific activity under output 3, *activity 3.1. Implementation of entrepreneurship skills development (pre-incubation, incubation, and post-incubation).*

**Finding 3:** **the project strategy focused on addressing capacity gaps with inconsistent internal coherence and limited efforts placed in addressing structural transformation and long-term private sector development**

1. The theory of change presented in the project document was consistent with the rationale for entrepreneurship development. However, the ecosystem development aspect to entrepreneurship development of the ToC statement was only presented in the employment component of the project (outcome 1), with no meso-level interventions designed to promote the broader entrepreneurship ecosystem (outcome 2). The value of the one-stop-shop provided by KJFL as an avenue to promote entrepreneurship, market linkages and integrated services, was not fully reflected in the choice of interventions and the allocation of resources. In outcome 2, YEES largely focused on direct assistance to entrepreneurs, through capacity building and access to seed capital for equipment to help develop business ideas, present viable business models and enhance growth opportunities. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Timor-Leste for instance was not actively engaged in the design or the implementation of the project, except for the participation as jury member in the BIC. Except for the support to the soft loan scheme, the project strategy did not focus on the engagement of stakeholders to promote transformational, meso-level interventions, such as value chain development, market linkages, market infrastructure development, etc. The largely downstream support (capacities and seed funds) was found to be relevant to the immediate needs of the youth but not the needs of companies and the market more broadly, and not coherent with the ecosystem promotion intent presented in the ToC statement.
2. The internal coherence of the project was challenged by the selection of some interventions. At odds with the overall project strategy, YEES envisioned the support to two local bakeries to produce healthy food to supplement the school feeding programme. From consultations, it emerged that there was a limited background to the nature of this activity and at the time of this review, discussions with partners in the country had not started. There is room to bring the activity together in a more coherent way with the broader strategy of the project to support the achievement of the project’s outputs.
3. In addition, the entrepreneurship development component designed and implemented two different strategies to start-up incubation in relation to the sources of funds, further challenging the internal coherence. Start-ups received a comprehensive training programme under 3 pre-defined incubation A diagram of growth and growth of small businesses

   Description automatically generated with medium confidencestages, and up to USD 2,500 when they applied to the Seed Funding Incubation programme funded by KOICA. These trainings included a Grow Your Business Idea (GYBI) training over 2 days in the first 3 months (pre-incubation phase); a second 5-day training Start Your Business Idea (SYBI) focusing on the development of a business plan over the following 3 to 12 months (incubation phase), which culminated with a competition and the allocation of the seed funds; and finally, a post-incubation training called Improve Your Business (IYB) one year after the SYB training and the seed funds which supports entrepreneurs to graduate to small enterprises and access finance. This approach was also reflected in the project strategy in figure 6. Start-ups who applied to the Business Incubation Challenge (BIC) component, funded by MCI, received only a 5-day SYBI training to develop their business plan before accessing the pitching competition and receiving up to USD 10,000 in seed funds. BIC winners did not receive pre- or post-incubation training nor received follow up mentoring and coaching from the project. There was therefore a dual approach within the same activity (activity 3.1) which was defined by the sources of funds and not aligned to the broader strategy defined in the project document.

*Figure 6 – YEES Strategy to entrepreneurship develop support, as per Project Document*

**Finding 4: YEES demonstrated strong convening power among government actors, with room to extend coordination with the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem.**

1. Stakeholders identified a large number of existing initiatives promoted by civil society organizations, bilateral donors, and multilateral organizations in support of youth entrepreneurship in Timor-Leste. In this crowded space, partners highlighted the need to promote a degree of coordination and ensure efforts in bringing these actors together.
2. The value added of YEES was found to be in its ability to bring together a number of government and public actors, while promoting data sharing and coordination in the public sector. For instance, through YEES, SERVE, the government agency responsible for business registration, worked along IADE (the public agency responsible for SME support and skills development), SEFOPE (the organ of the government responsible for employment, vocational training and labour policies), and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. This coordination was found to be strong and effective in Dili, and partially satisfactory in the municipalities where SEFOPE, IADE, Youth Centers and the Municipalities jointly participate in the project.
3. **Youth behavioral studies and experience across UNDP projects can further expand YEES’ outreach.** Effectively responding to thecontext,the UNDP Timor-Leste Parliament project conducted a study on how to engage youth more effectively for more constructive participation. This was done by identifying personas of key typologies of youths and defining concrete actions on how to engage them more effectively on the basis of their unique characteristics. This led to the design of different engagement strategies focusing on different outreach and communication channels. The outcome of this study was found to be highly relevant for the YEES project, particularly in designing outreach campaigns for critical activities, such as internship programme, entrepreneurship component, or the soft loan component. Synergies between these two different but complementary UNDP projects have the potential to strengthen the effectiveness of YEES’ impact. Similarly, synergies and exchange of lessons with other UNDP’s projects supporting youth and / or job creation can promote the impact and coherence of the overall support to youth employment and entrepreneurship.

## Effectiveness

* To what extent were the project results achieved, and activities implemented as per the intended outputs and targets set out in the project document?
* How effective was the project in contributing to the employment and entrepreneurship of youths of all genders in Timor-Leste?
* What factors, systems, and mechanisms have contributed to achieving or not achieving the intended results? How effective was the identification and management of risks?

1. During the mid-term evaluation, the project document and the changes approved by the Project Board and recorded in the minutes provided the reference for the analysis of the project’s progress and effectiveness of the results. The project’s result and resource framework included a well-defined set of outcomes, outputs, and related indicators, baselines and targets. Annual outcome level targets were bilaterally agreed with KOICA, and these were used as reference to review YEES’ progress against its planned outcome level impact. Outcome level changes were, however, not rated in this mid-term evaluation. Targets from years 1 to 3 were used as a basis for the assessment, in line with KOICA’s reporting requirements.

**Rating: Partially Satisfactory – 2**

**Justification for rating:** The project was partially satisfactory in achieving the desired results expected for the first 3 years of implementation, due to an imprecise target setting. The youth internship programme was particularly effective, and the project was making progress in providing youths with skills and seed funds to start their businesses. The project faced delays in the establishment of systems to provide holistic support to employability. The project did well in identifying risks, but the implementation of the mitigations was incomplete. The transformational impact of the project could not be assessed due to the absence of qualitative data on the jobs and the start-ups.

1. The evaluation noted that the results and targets provided in the signed UNDP Project Document signed by UNDP and the Ministry of Commerce differed from the results targets agreed in a different KOICA project document agreed with KOICA. This evaluation used the UNDP project document as the basis for the review.

**Finding 5: the project made progress towards its targets, however, the effect of the national elections on the engagement with key counterparts, and an imprecise target setting, affected its perceived effectiveness.**

1. **6-year targets for a 5.5-year implementation.** The YEES project was signed in July 2022 following several months of consultations with the two main donors, KOICA and the then Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industry (now Ministry of Commerce and Industry). However, its implementation started only in August 2022. With an estimated end date of December 2027, the YEES project was de facto a 5.5-year project. Nonetheless, the results and resources framework and the multi-year work plan, including the budget, were designed for a 6-year project. **As of the time of this mid-term evaluation, the project was implemented for just over 2 years, but it was measured against year 3 targets as per donor’s guidance. This approach unfortunately highly penalized the project and showed an inaccurate picture of its performance, which did not provide a fair representation of the efforts and progress made by the team in the implementation of the project over the last two years.**
2. The review of project documentation, the interviews and the survey results showed that the project made progress towards the identified indicators and results. These, however, for the reasons mentioned above, did not provide a fair picture. Based on the rating system the evaluation team developed[[13]](#footnote-13), the review showed that:

* 17% of the indicators were *overachieved*
* 56% of the indicators were *partially achieved*
* 28% of the indicators were *not achieved*

1. The table below provides an articulation of the rating and for a complete overview of the assessment for all the indicators, see [Annex VI](#_Annex_VI_-).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Output** | **Number of indicators** | **Rating** |
| **Output 1:** Youth obtain skills, competencies and knowledge to be employed | 7 | Overachieved: 2  Partially achieved: 4  Not achieved: 1 |
| **Output 2:** Service providers are available to deliver holistic support to enhance employability | 4 | Overachieved: 1  Partially achieved: 1  Not achieved: 2 |
| **Output 3:** Youth, including migrants/ returnees, obtain skills, knowledge, and services to start or expand their business | 7 | Partially achieved: 5  Not achieved: 2 |

1. Progress varied across the 3 outputs. Comparatively, outcome 1 and its two outputs made closer progress to its targets as compared to outcome 2. Although with some gaps, 2 targets were overachieved, **Output 1 (youths’ skill development and employment)** made reassuring progress towards the achievement of its key results. **Output 2 (service providers’ support to employability)** exceeded one target and was making progress on the other 3. **Output 3 (youth entrepreneurship)** made progress in most of the indicators, but these were not enough to meet year 3 targets.
2. The following section provides an overview of the assessment conducted of the project’s effectiveness and progress towards the achievement of its planned results, with key findings, and contributing factors.

***Outcome 1: youth become employed***

## Output 1: Youth obtain skills, competencies and knowledge to be employed

**Finding 6: YEES was able to achieve promising results in supporting access to jobs to youth, while showing agility in the approach. This was found to be the most effective component of the project to date.**

1. **Supporting interns of all genders effectively.** It was found that 239 fresh graduates were assigned to 51 institutions across 4 municipalities, and at the time of the mid-term evaluation, 96% of these interns completed the internship programme. The mid-term evaluation found that 99 interns, i.e. 41% of the youth assigned to institutions across 5 different batches, were able to secure a job. The project was particularly successful in securing job placements for women, who accounted for 62% of the youths able to secure a job after the YIP. This is an impressive result considering that less than 15% of the overall project budget is allocated to this component, demonstrating a high degree of efficiency.
2. This component was found to be the most effective, given the overachievement of the targets set for the number of host institutions as well as the job placement. Moreover, consultations with a wide range of stakeholders across municipalities, including host institutions, interns, SEFOPE and INDMO, conveyed a high degree of satisfaction with the internship programme. The value added of YEES Youth Internship Programme (YIP) was in UNDP’s outreach and convening capacities which attracted a larger number of potential interns to the vacancies. The data collected found that the combination of additional services – such as soft skills training, career counseling, and job search assistance to former interns – with on-the-job placement was particularly effective in leveraging internships as steppingstones rather than dead ends, and in securing employment for the youth. The transformational dimension of this component could not be assessed due to the unavailability of data on the quality of jobs (contract type, length, pay structure, etc.), given it was not required by the project framework.
3. **Soft skills development was confirmed to be critical in increasing the school-to-work transition.** The development of two skills training modules was planned in the first year of implementation. These included one module for Training of Trainers (ToT) and one for students. As per plans, the training modules would be developed by updating the modules used by the previous phase of the YEES project, to be finalized in consultation with SEFOPE and INDMO, for certification, standardization, and distribution. The content of the training was very comprehensive and aligned to the needs identified in the project’s problem analysis. The content included critical soft skills such as communications and leadership, teamwork, conflict management, meeting management, problem solving, work ethics, etc. It was found that only one module, the ToT one, was available while the student module was under formulation. Although the project proactively identified a local consultant in the first year, the development of the module was hindered by delays, predominantly due to the need to change the consultant in a limited labour market. The certification and accreditation process were lengthier than planned and the identification of a master trainer to deliver the ToT particularly challenging.
4. **Agility in addressing challenges.** These challenges affected the implementation of this component and consequently, the dissemination of training to young people in the municipalities by SEFOPE and the Youth Centers. Although the soft skill module for youths was not available, the project team delivered the training to all 239 interns before their placement in host institutions. This ability to overcome the challenge by leveraging existing capacities was found particularly effective. The host institutions consulted during the consultations reported significant satisfaction with the higher degree of professionalism they found in the YEES’ interns, as compared to their own or other internship programmes, and this ultimately affected their decision to hire YIP youths.

## Output 2: Service providers are available to deliver holistic support to enhance employability

1. **Time to recalibrate following the elections.** It was found thatthe 2023 general elections and the change in the country affected the timely implementation of this output. The change required YEES to re-engage the leadership of SEFOPE and negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two institutions for the implementation of YEES and beyond, contributing to delays in the interventions and achievement of the targets.
2. This output envisioned the upgrade of SEFOPE’s SIMU-web, an online platform with information on jobseekers, particularly those graduating from vocational training centers, and records of job vacancies through a more active, comprehensive and accessible tool. At the time of the MTE, the demo of the platform and its user manuals were available and launched in July 2024. However, the platform was not operational, not populated with the required data, and did not allow users to enter/update their CVs nor to employers to provide vacancies. Therefore, the effectiveness of this component to support service providers in providing services could not be assessed.

**Finding 7: career counseling is a critical factor in promoting career development and linkages with the education section can further expand its effectiveness beyond the empowerment of Youth Centers.**

1. **Strong value of career counseling with opportunities for expansion.** Significant progress was found under output 2, in the provision of career counseling training to Youth Centers and CEOPs/ SEFOPE in the 4 municipalities. The target was exceeded, and 56 trainers received the career counseling ToT with the training module developed by the project.
2. However, at the time of the MTE, the provision of job readiness services to youth beneficiaries had not started. Consultations with government officials in the municipalities highlighted that some did not feel the ToT prepared them to deliver counseling training and sessions to youth. It was also found that a number of youths received career counseling training by the YEES team. Therefore, the effectiveness of this component and the empowerment of local actors to operate as a hub to guide job seekers may require further efforts before it can be confirmed.
3. The project supported the provision of equipment to Youth Centers; however, these centers were not provided with functional responsibilities and an updated organogram with assigned and trained staff to provide career guidance. Despite this is a critical aspect of the sustainability of this project component, the project document did not include dedicated activities to operationalize this effort. In future, the project board can be consulted with options on how to implement this expectation in partnership with SEFOPE and the Ministry of Youth and Sports.
4. Stakeholders consulted over the course of the mid-term evaluation recognized that career counseling was a critical step in shaping young students’ career directions and ability to navigate the transition from school to work. Some raised that its effectiveness can be further enhanced by facilitating these discussions earlier on, and before students conclude university. High schools, universities and vocational/technical training centers were seen playing a key role in guiding students in the most appropriate university or vocational training, in line with their passions and needs, and a stronger awareness of the projected gaps in the labour market. **In future, secondary schools can be engaged in the ToT and provide career counseling services to students.**
5. **Convening power of the project in organizing job fairs.** It was found that the job fair organized in Ermera in 2024 in close collaboration with SEFOPE was well received and attended by young graduates, students, job providers, and stakeholders. This effort was also being replicated through government efforts, reflecting the perceived impact of these efforts and government ownership. However, this component was hindered by communications challenges and considerable delays, due to the need to re-engage the leadership of SEFOPE. Consequently, the results of this activity fell short of the target set in the project document to organize 1 to 2 job fairs per year. Stakeholders raised the need to bring these networking initiatives to the local level with the aim of engaging young graduates from remote and rural areas, to increase social inclusion, and extend these opportunities to connect with job providers and potentially be noticed.

## Output 3: Youth, including migrants/returnees, obtain skills, knowledge, and services to start or expand their business

1. Under this output, a key activity was the implementation of the entrepreneurship skills development programme. This was a structured support designed along 3 key stages, to accompany young start-ups from the ideation of a business idea to incubation, through incubation support and seed funds, up to graduation to small enterprise.

**Finding 8: the combination of skill development and seed funds was a strong feature of entrepreneurship support. This can benefit from a more targeted focus on enhanced follow-up, mentoring, market analysis and linkages across all target locations.**

1. **Effective capacity to distribute seed funds to start-ups without measurement of business performance.** Since its launch in July 2022, YEES provided funding opportunities to 333 start-ups. Two of these (BIC 3 and BIC 4) were conducted under the Business Incubation Challenge umbrella funded by MCI, and one through the Seed Funds umbrella funded by KOICA. Across these 3 funding opportunities, at the time of the mid-term evaluation, 70% of the start-ups had an ongoing business (see figure 7). On average, 40% of the active start-ups were women-led while the gender mainstreaming of the migrant workers component was particularly disadvantaged. The reason lied in the nature of the labour that Timorese migrant workers in Korea have access to. This is predominantly manual and construction work, which attracts a majority of male migrants from Timor-Leste. Therefore, YEES’ entrepreneurship support activities in Korea saw an overrepresentation of men (only 2 women).
2. A pie chart with text

   Description automatically generatedSecondary data showed that the BICs across all the iterations (BIC 1 to 4) have contributed to the creation of 1,597 jobs (41% female). However, the project results framework did not capture elements of business performance. Qualitative data on the improved revenue, sales, scale of the start-ups or quality of the jobs provided was not available.

*Figure 7 – Status of YEES start-ups after seed funds*

1. A blue and yellow pie chart

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   Description automatically generated**Room to enquire about the reasons behind geographical differences.** Primary and secondary data showed a sharp variance in the success rate across municipalities. In BIC 3 for instance, in the Western region, 40% of the businesses supported were still active at the time of the MTE, as compared with 92% in the Eastern region and 85% in the Central region. Notable variations were also present within regions, with some municipalities, such as Liquica, reporting 23% of ongoing businesses against 40% and 54% in Ermera and Bobonaro respectively. The targets were not geographically targeted and an analysis of the reasons behind these regional differences was not available. **Considering the business incubation activity (activity 3.1) alone represented close to 46% of the overall project budget, a deeper analysis of the geographical variance of this activity was deemed critical for the overall success of the project.**
2. **Good visibility with some room to focus on targeted selection.** Stakeholders highlighted the importance of ensuring an accurate selection of the entrepreneurs from the early days of the business development support, and to give opportunities to the youth with ambition, an idea, and the desire to make a difference. Suggestions to strengthen the selection included:

* Expand the outreach beyond Facebook and engage community radios, printed leaflets, community boards, schools, etc. and ensure dissemination at the local / suco level.
* Engage local groups in the identification and selection of entrepreneurs to the pre-incubation phase. These groups can include youth groups, IADE, suco chiefs, etc.
* Establish clear criteria to award the seed funds / equipment support giving priority to innovation, demand in the market, uniqueness, quality, and scalability potential.
* Establish a written ‘compact’ with the winners of the seed funds / equipment support stating the terms of the engagement and requesting their full commitment in engaging in the programme until the graduation phase and beyond.

1. Youth beneficiaries found that this output’s key value added was the provision of well-coordinated entrepreneurship skills training (pre-incubation, incubation, and post-incubation) jointly with access to seed funds to set-up workspace, storage, purchase equipment or tools that may be needed to start or expand the start-up. This combination of training and business development support effectively addressed their most immediate needs. However, data showed that the absence of targeted market analysis, tailored production support, and infrastructural challenges severely hampered the growth ability of the start-ups. While value was found in the networking opportunities provided by inviting successful entrepreneurs to expos and markets and creating informal or formal business connections, this supported only a small number of entrepreneurs and mostly those based in Dili.
2. **Value chain analysis was a good basis for future support and promoting market linkages, but more investment was needed.** A value chain analysis report was developed in 2024, analyzing the youth led enterprises supported by YEES and mapping 3 value chains (vegetables, tilapia and local chicken). The report also identified 5 key constraints start-ups face in conducting and/or expanding their businesses. The project was expected to undertake more analysis (4 in total) of demand and supply, input/resources availability, value chains, etc. to inform the selection of enterprises. This was an insightful analysis with the potential to be very valuable to future entrepreneurs. In future, more detailed market analyses can be used by the YEES team to provide end to end support to entrepreneurs in targeted sectors / value chains, with the aim to facilitate market linkages and provide targeted advice.
3. Stakeholders highlighted that the key priority was to receive **continuous mentoring and coaching**. Very few of the interviewed entrepreneurs (only 2 seed funding winners, one session each) reported to have received mentoring or coaching following the seed funds / equipment support, despite being a key element of the project strategy. Reasons for the limited uptake of a follow-up programme are linked to staffing gaps in the project team, wide geographical distribution of the start-ups, and limited technical knowledge of the project staff to cover the diversity of the sectors supported by the project. **Moving forward, it was deemed critical to ensure that continuous support is provided beyond monitoring, with regular mentoring and coaching by experienced entrepreneurs, to strengthen the sustainability of the project’s impact.**
4. Stakeholders highlighted that a more targeted approach to the selection, support, training and financing of start-ups in line with pre-defined sectors / value chains, would allow entrepreneurs to receive practical and tailored guidance, while also being closer to peers engaged in similar businesses. Entrepreneurs raised the need to complement business management skill trainings, with training on production capacities to ensure their businesses can improve the market value of their products / services and possibly meet national and international standards.

**Finding 9: access to finance was a critical component of the project which may be undermined by institutional delays in the launch of the soft loan scheme.**

1. YEES and the previous phases have significantly expanded access to finance opportunities in Timor-Leste for SMEs. The technical advice to the government with the formulation of the 2022 Soft Loan Decree and more recently with the amendment of the model was an effective way to expand opportunities to micro and small entrepreneurs who cannot afford commercial loans with high interest rates. This was considered a landmark achievement in strengthening entrepreneurship in the country and is supporting transformational change for entrepreneurship development.
2. Under the YEES project, the Soft Loan component witnessed a number of challenges, largely linked to the outcome of the elections and the political directions of the new government. The change led to the suspension of the Soft Loan scheme, to allow for a review of its process and effectiveness. At the time of this MTE, the Soft Loan was on hold for over a year and under review to develop an updated and improved form. Stakeholders displayed high expectations regarding this mechanism and delays in its approval can affect the ability of promising enterprises to scale small and medium size businesses accessing affordable interest rates. It is important in the near future to define contingency plans and options in providing access to affordable finance to start-ups as they graduate from the YEES incubation model, should the Soft Loan not be approved in a reasonable time.

## Management of risks

1. The performance of the project on risk management was mixed. Annex 3 and the risk and assumptions section of the YEES project document provided a risk matrix with the 3 risks identified through the Social and Environmental Screening. The risk register included brief and incomplete risk statements, with fair coverage of the most relevant strategic, political, organizational, and social and environmental risks. The project monitoring plan required the risk register to be monitored and actions managed on a quarterly basis, however the MTE did not find evidence of quarterly management of risks. The project had identified a set of risk mitigation measures; however, these were not consistently implemented. This included the implementation of targeted strategies to ensure the participation of marginalized and disadvantaged groups in project outreach and activities, including people with disabilities, or the establishment of a Grievance Redress Mechanism. Some risks were not identified, and no mitigation measures were designed. These include risks related to ethics, conflicts of interest, etc. The project progress report provided an update on the risks, with no description of the challenges and implementation of the measures. The project risk management performance is summarized in the table in [Annex X](#_Annex_X_–).

## Efficiency

* How efficiently were the resources, including human, material and financial, used to achieve the above results in a timely manner? To what extent has the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective (e.g. value for money)?
* To what extent was the existing project management structure including monitoring/quality assurance and results framework appropriate and efficient in generating and measuring the expected results?
* How effective were the project’s management arrangements in overseeing project performance and ensuring the independent and impartial assurance of project results?
* To what extent is the project M&E framework and the data collected to monitor results effective in measuring results and include disaggregated data by gender, ethnic group, disability, etc.?

**Rating: Partially satisfactory - 2**

**Justification for rating:** The project used its resources as per project document, demonstrating various degrees of efficiency across its interventions. This was further affected by the lack of qualitative parameters in the measurement of project results and the inefficient allocation of project staff capacities to support entrepreneurs. The independent oversight by the project board can be affected by conflict roles among its members.

**Finding 10**: **Project resources were used in alignment with the project document but showed inconsistent degrees of efficiency across outputs.**

1. As of October 2024, the YEES Project delivered USD 3,132,127 or 39 % of the USD 8,120,947 of the overall project budget. The bulk of the total budget, 59 %, was allocated to Output 3 which included all project activities related to entrepreneurship. The rest of the budget was allocated evenly for Output 1 and Output 2 both at 13% of the total budget. Output 1 included all the project activities related to internship and soft skills training. Output 2 was allocated for the enhancement of SEFOPE’s online job platform and for career counseling.

*Table 4 -YEES Project Financial Delivery Report, October 2024*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Project Budget**  **(USD)[[14]](#footnote-14)** | **Budget %** | **2022**  **Delivery** | **2023**  **Delivery** | **2024**  **Delivery** | **Total Delivery** | **Delivery %** |
| **Output 1:** Youth obtain skills, competencies, and knowledge to be employed | 1,059,513 | 13% | 88,245 | 208,976 | 128,870 | 426,091 | 40% |
| **Output 2:** Service providers are available to deliver holistic support to enhance employability | 1,042,625 | 13% | 67,913 | 302,387 | 112,939 | 483,239 | 46% |
| **Output 3:** Youth, including migrants/ returnees, obtain skills, knowledge, and services to start or expand their business | 4,784,460 | 59% | 166,327 | 1,177,593 | 427,476 | 1,771,396 | 37% |
| PMC and GMS | 1,234,350 | 15% | 152,444 | 164,459 | 134,498 | 451,401 | 37% |
| **Total** | **8,120,947** |  | **474,930** | **1,853,414** | **803,783** | **3,132,127** | **39%** |

1. Overall, the project’s use of financial resources was appropriate and aligned with the project document. For the first 2 years of implementation, secondary data showed that financial delivery was consistently high (90% on year 1 and 86% on year 2) as per annual work plans approved by the project board. The project faced delays due to the reasons mentioned earlier, largely related to the outcome of the elections, delays in the identification of local consultants for the formulation of the ToT and training package, and in recruiting key project business development staff to implement outcome 2.
2. By October 2024, the project had delivered 40% of the overall project budget, 3 years before the estimated completion of the project. Although the project did not request no-cost extensions, it was penalized by an effectively reduced implementation timeline with no changes in the target settings.
3. With regards to the use of resources, at the time of the MTE, 99 interns became employed through YEES support and the internship programme (output 1), while 236 young men and women became entrepreneurs with YEES support and the accelerator programme (output 3). As of October 2024, 14% of the resources were delivered under output 1 and 57% contributed to output 3. Consequently, output 1 expressed a significantly higher degree of efficiency in achieving its results and creating 99 jobs.

**Finding 11**: **conflicting roles in the project board can challenge the efficiency of the results.**

1. **Conflicting roles of Project Board members.** The functioning of the Project Board was found to be timely, with 3 meetings since the start of the project, focused on the approval of annual work plans and reviewing previous year’s progress.
2. SEFOPE and IADE have a dual role in the project. As per Project Document strategy, they were engaged by UNDP (via a Letter of Agreement) as Responsible Parties to implement specific project components, and they also took part in the Project Board meetings as voting members. This was found to be in contradiction with the Terms of Reference of the Project Board (Annex 5 of the Project Document) which mentioned that “*representatives from responsible parties to the project cannot sit in the Project Board as formal voting members; they can (if requested) attend board meeting as observers*”. Given the main responsibility of the board was to provide high-level oversight of the implementation of the project, to avoid conflicts of interest, responsible parties actively implementing project activities cannot also be engaged in decision-making. SEFOPE and IADE had conflicting roles in the project and moving forward, it is important to review the Project Board composition and clarify the role of the members, defining whether they benefit from the project or they are actively implementing it.
3. In addition, the minutes of the first board meeting were not signed by all members, it is therefore important to ensure that Project Board members sign the board ToR declaring their impartiality in the oversight of the project.

**Finding 12: project capacities were not efficiently allocated to provide quality support to entrepreneurs across all project locations.**

1. YEES was a DIM project, which implied that the implementation of the project was led and administered by UNDP, with the support of the UNDP Country Office in Timor-Leste. This included the procurement of goods, services, recruitment of personnel, payments, coordination, and provision of advice.
2. **The dual staffing structure can be clarified.** Stakeholders showed appreciation for the management of the project and overall positive feedback on the project. The team went through a number of changes in the first two years of implementation. The level of some positions increased with the approval of the Project Board and others transitioned to a different contractual modality due to the limited success in attracting candidates[[15]](#footnote-15). This contributed to delays in the implementation of output 3. At the time of the mid-term evaluation, the organizational structure of the team presented a team organized in sub-teams. It was noted, however, that all 23 YEES team members report directly to the Project Manager, which was not found to be an effective way to manage a decentralized team, covering a number of technical areas and across multiple municipalities.
3. In addition, it was found that the positions were organized in line with their sources of funds. This led to a dual structure, where some business assistants focused on MCI-funded start-ups while others focused on KOICA funded start-ups, as per respective approach (see Finding 3). As a result, there was an inconsistent level of support provided to start-ups under the YEES project through the incubation programme. Practically, at the time of the review, business assistants funded by MCI were responsible for the monitoring and mentoring of over 60 start-ups each, while business assistants funded by KOICA were responsible for 11 to 15 start-ups each. This created an inefficient distribution of capacities and room to maximize the available resources to ensure equal and quality support to the start-ups, independently of their geographical location and source of funds. As mentioned previously, there was no evidence of continuous support to entrepreneurs through mentoring and coaching, despite the incubation activity representing close to 50 % of the overall project budget.

**Finding 13: the project M&E framework was designed to measure breath rather than depth of the interventions and their impact.**

1. **Focus on breadth rather than depth.** The results and resources framework of the project provided a comprehensive set of outcomes, outputs, indicators, baselines and targets. This was clearly articulated in the project document and further defined in the project document matrix with KOICA. Since the beginning of the project, MCI has provided two different funding contributions. The results related to the first contribution were integrated into the project document, while the second contribution was not accompanied by an increase in the project targets and did not lead to an amendment of the project results and resources framework. Therefore, the project M&E framework was not conducive to effectively measure the contribution of all project resources towards the project outcomes.
2. While most indicators are **specific and measurable**, particularly those that are quantitative in nature (e.g. number of youths trained, employed, engaged in internships), there are gaps in clarity and comprehensiveness. For instance, terms such as “improved soft skills” and “effective career counseling” can be considered subjective and may affect measurement and interpretation without a methodological note outlining clear definitions or benchmarks. Additionally, while **time-bound** targets are provided for many indicators, certain qualitative outputs referring to the refinement of training modules or long-term sustainability outcomes lack measurable milestones, which could lead to potential gaps in accountability.
3. The project’s monitoring plan, as defined in the Project Document, follows standard UNDP requirements for monitoring. All monitoring activities, with the exception of the management and monitoring of risks, have been performed regularly, based on the frequency specified in the monitoring plan. The project document multi-year work plan also includes activities related to project monitoring and these are likewise reflected in the project annual work plan. Project staff included a full-time M&E Officer, in charge of the formulation and coordination of the annual monitoring plan, including monitoring data from the filed coordinators and the development of project progress reports. However, M&E activities were budgeted under ‘technical support and quality control’ with no dedicated budget for data collection and independent monitoring.
4. The mid-term evaluation notes that there are some elements that could help improve the M&E framework to measure the impact of the interventions.

* As mentioned earlier, the targets set in the RRF were not **achievable** within the project’s current timeframe and resources allocated. The ambitiousness of the targets affected the perceived performance of the project.
* Although the indicators were **relevant,** quantitative indicators largely outnumber the qualitative measure of the results. Most of the output level indicators referred to attendance by different sets of beneficiaries to training, with limited reference (with the exception of indicator 1.3.2) to improved knowledge or the use of the knowledge acquired. Indicators measuring the application of the learning shared through the training can help measure the impact and sustainability of the efforts.
* There were no indicators measuring the quality of the start-ups, such as financial sustainability, gross sales, increased income of the entrepreneurs, long-term employment retention of trainees etc. These can help further assess the sustainability of the project interventions.
* The RRF did not fully account for qualitative aspects such as the quality of training or the satisfaction of stakeholders and employers. These are crucial for assessing the effectiveness of project interventions.
* There was not a methodological note on the data collection of outcome level indicators. Therefore, it was found that outcome indicator 2.1 measured the same results already reported under output indicators 3.1.2. In addition, baseline indicators and data were not clearly defined for qualitative indicators, which affects the comparability of results from the baseline data. Stronger clarity on the means of verifications and clearer methodological notes can help avoid reporting the same results at output and outcome level and promote quality reporting.
* 5 of the 18 output indicators in the M&E framework provide gender disaggregated targets, and these were an effective way to measure the impact of a gender strategy. However, there was no disaggregation by age group, geographical location (rural vs urban) or disability which would allow to measure the effectiveness of the LNOB and targeting strategy.

## Sustainability

* To what extent are the planned results of the project likely to be durable and can be maintained or even scaled up and replicated by UNDP and/or other partners?
* To what extent do project interventions have a well-designed and planned sustainability and scaling up strategy? What could be done to strengthen the project’s sustainability and scaling up strategy?

**Rating: Partially satisfactory - 2**

**Justification for rating:** The project has been able to support the implementation of important policy frameworks for SME development and included the formulation of institutional mechanisms to support employment services. However, the long-term impact of the project cannot be assessed due to absence of qualitative metrics to measure knowledge transfer, viability of the start-ups and the integration of ESG considerations in start-up support. The absence of a long-erm strategy makes it likely that resources are not leading to long term impact.

**Finding 14: promising indications of institutional sustainability and ownership but require further investments in measuring the impact of the project in the medium to long term.**

1. National ownership was intrinsic to the nature of design of the project, with the government demonstrating a high degree of ownership and stewardship in YEES interventions and results.
2. From an ***institutional sustainability*** perspective, the country had a number of frameworks enabling support to SMEs[[16]](#footnote-16) and UNDP played a critical role in their operationalization. YEES and its preceding phases supported the establishment of a legal framework to provide access to finance to entrepreneurs, through the Sof Loan Decree Law (Decree 33/2022) and the iterations of the business processes regulating the disbursement and management of the access to credit. The existence of a legal mechanism that allowed entrepreneurs to access credit at interest rates which were 4 to 5 times below the rates of commercial banks, with 75% guarantee (collateral) by the government, was considered a key contributing factor affecting the sustainability of this project component. UNDP played a critical role in operationalizing this decree through advisory services, however, as mentioned previously, ongoing political discussions could pose risks to the impact of this intervention and required close monitoring and definition of mitigation measures.
3. Stakeholders noted that the project was highly aligned to existing programmes of key government agencies, and this was a promising sign of potential sustainability. SEFOPE for instance had comparable and complementary programmes for job placements, training, and job fairs. Similarly, IADE was the leading public agency in entrepreneurship support, receiving public resources to provide support to targeted and promising SMEs. In addition, through the agreement between YEES and MCI, UNDP de facto implemented the government acceleration programme via the BIC component of the YEES project. This alignment of the project with existing interventions can be leveraged in designing a targeted sustainability and long-term strategy. The project, however, did not include a capacity building element designed to hand the coordination of the accelerator over to the government.
4. From a ***financial sustainability*** perspective, national authorities demonstrated a high degree of commitment to the development of SMEs by allocating USD 50 million to the Soft Loan programme and its guarantees, and over USD 1 million to the SME accelerator programme (BIC) implemented by YEES. Youth employment and entrepreneurship development was a key priority of the new administration, therefore political and financial commitment was expected to continue. As mentioned, however, the YEES project, due to its design, did not measure the financial viability nor the profitability of the start-ups. Therefore, it was not possible to assess the sustainability of the jobs created. This gap in monitoring the quality of the enterprises, if not addressed through a revised approach, may affect the impact of the interventions. Which in turn, can affect the availability of financial resources beyond YEES.
5. From a ***socio-economic perspective***, the project invested heavily in strengthening the capacities of youths and service providers, and in addressing the key barriers identified in its theory of change. YEES integrates ToTs into institutionalized key components, such as soft skills training and career counseling. The MTE noted that in the absence of impact measurement on the absorption of training knowledge, the sustainability and effectiveness of the training and their results could not be verified. Similarly, the effectiveness of the skills introduced through the pre-incubation, incubation and post-incubation training was not captured in the results framework and its targets creating challenges in assessing the sustainability of these critical interventions. Moreover, as mentioned in findings 8, continued follow up after the seed funds, in the form of mentoring, coaching, market analysis and linkages, was critical in ensuring that the efforts of the project last over time. It was found that there was room to further strengthen continuous follow-up to start-ups, beyond training and funds, to capitalize on the efforts of the project in the medium to long term.
6. From a ***social and environmental sustainability*** perspective, the project did not integrate a focus on socially and environmentally sustainable business practices in the support to start-ups and in establishing business models. Given the infant nature of the private sector, an ESG approach was not included in the project strategy. It was noted that even start-ups in the agriculture sector – which accounted for 66.9%[[17]](#footnote-17) of the supported enterprises - rarely included climate adaptation and resilience considerations in the nature of the technical support provided, or the equipment purchased. Therefore, the social and environmental sustainability of the project cannot be assessed. As the project progresses to future phases, efforts can be made to strengthen the capacities of stakeholders in embedding social and environmental standards in the support provided to young entrepreneurs.

## Cross-cutting issues

* To what extent was the project approach effective in promoting social inclusion - particularly focusing on the marginalised and the poor? Were these groups consulted and meaningfully involved in project design, planning and implementation
* To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?
* To what extent has the project promoted positive changes of differently abled people? Were these groups consulted and meaningfully involved in project design, planning and implementation? What barriers did they face?

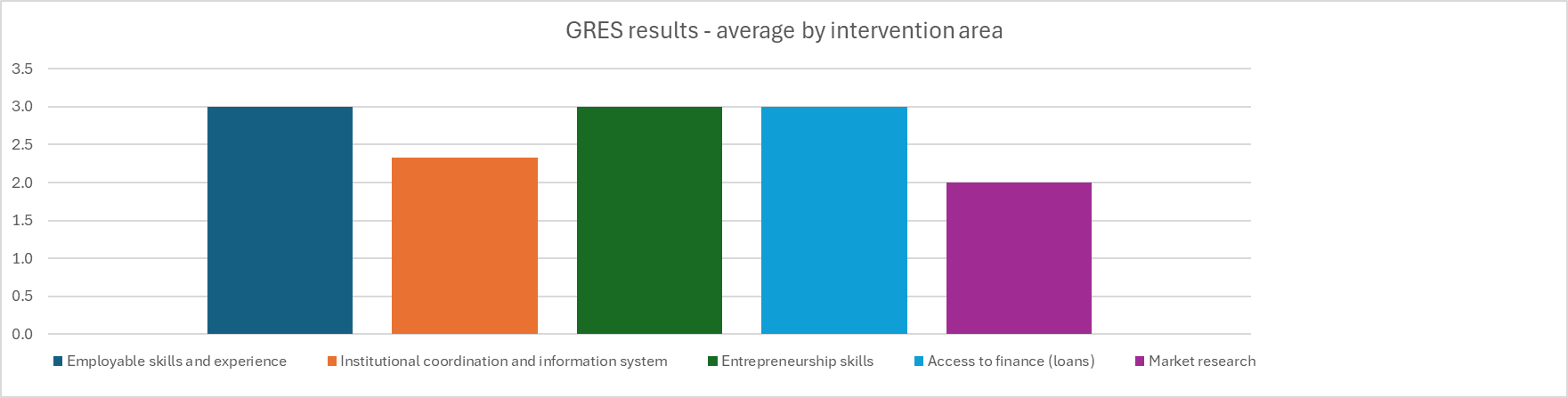
## Gender equality and the empowerment of women

**Finding 15: gaps in gender results and achievements across geographical areas due to the absence of a targeted support to women in accessing employment and throughout the entrepreneurship acceleration approach.**

**Rating: Partially satisfactory - 2**

**Justification for rating:** The project did not effectively mainstream cross-cutting issues in the design and implementation of its interventions. While gender targets were integrated in the project’s ambition and disaggregation of some of the targets, YEES did not include gender consideration in outreach and support to women entrepreneurs. The project did not include a focus on social inclusion in its support to youth. Gender mainstreaming was partially satisfactory while the mainstreaming of social inclusion was not satisfactory.

1. The project results framework in the UNDP project document provides gender disaggregated target for 5 of the 18 output indicators. Areas related to institutional systems and coordination, and market analysis were gender blind, while the areas targeting youth skills and access to loans included a gender breakdown at the output indicator level. The data indicated that the M&E framework used to report to KOICA provided a more detailed set of targets disaggregation by gender, and geographical location, marking differences compared to the results framework in the UNDP project document signed with the government. As a result, the project consistently reported the gender breakdown at activity and output level in its reporting to the donor.
2. **Evidence of impact on gender equality was uneven across project components.** Women’s participation in the Timorese labour market is highly uneven when compared to men. The 2022, ILO’s Timor-Leste Labour Force Survey reported that 85.5% of young women are engaged in subsistence work, compared to 59.5% of young men[[18]](#footnote-18). Also, young women are significantly more likely to be unemployed (12.4%) than young men (7.4%). Despite the difficult environment in which it is implemented, the results in 3 of the 5 areas were ‘*gender targeted’*. No results could be described as gender responsive as the emphasis was found on reporting on the number of targeted men and women against the targets, but not in addressing the differential needs of men, women, or marginalized groups in accessing project intervention and resources.

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1. The YEES project made impressive results in bridging this divide into the first outcome, and the Youth Internship Programme in particular in the employable skills and experience area. Over 60% of the interns enrolled into the programme were women and 62% of the young talents that were able to secure a job after on-the-job placements were women. This is a huge step in the right direction and allowed the project to exceed the gender targets set in the first output. This result was achieved through active outreach activities.
2. It was found that under output 3 on youth entrepreneurship, the soft loan component was somehow effective in supporting women in accessing finance. Of the 47 soft loans issued since the beginning of the project, 43% were women-headed enterprises. This is a notable result given that of the 79 applicants, only 35% were women-headed enterprises. In was found that the project was able to retain and support a higher percentage of women applicants in meeting the loan selection criteria set by the soft loan committee and the bank. This was the result of establishing active selection criteria, guidance, and capacity strengthening efforts aimed at mainstreaming a gender lens into the support leading to the selection with a differential impact on women and men. In addition, the 47 MSMEs supported through the loans created 373 jobs, and 49% of these jobs were provided by women. However, YEES did not design a continued support strategy to accompany loan recipients through the implementation of the loans. The impact of the loans on women’s empowerment and agency therefore could not be assessed due to the timing (loans were issued recently) and limited data to monitor the impact beyond the number of jobs created.
3. Under both the MCI-funded BIC component and the KOICA-funded seed funds component, the project faced challenges in attracting women and in advancing young women entrepreneurs through the stages of the competition and the support programme. Women were consistently engaged in the selection and support provided by the trainings and incubation; however, it was found that these efforts did not actively mainstream gender considerations into the incubation programme. On average, in BIC 3 and in the first batch of seed funds, only 30% of the supported start-ups through capital assistance were led by women. The gender gap was found to be particularly pronounced in selected municipalities (Ermera, Liquica, Bobonaro, Baucau), while in Dili, the participation of women in BIC and seed fund was equal. Despite the results framework expecting gender results, the implementation of the activities under this component faced challenges in mainstreaming efforts to address the complex barriers to entrepreneurship for women. Women reported additional burden in managing their start-ups due to societal expectations to care for family and children, social norms, and biases which affected their self-confidence and ability to remain in the programme. The evaluation did not find data on the participation of LGBTQ+ in project interventions.

## Social inclusion

**Finding 16: the absence of active targeting and a social inclusion strategy affected the ability of the project to measure the reach and impact on those further left behind.**

1. The project document did not seek to explicitly target marginalized groups through its work. Although the marginalized and vulnerable groups language appeared sporadically in the project document, the strategy did not clearly identify target groups and other potentially affected groups with targeted engagement strategies through the project cycle. The results framework in the project document was also not disaggregated by geographic locations, socio-economic data, disability, ethnic group, etc.
2. The Social and Environmental Screening was conducted during project design and provided in an annex to the project document. This clearly identified the risk of possible marginalization of vulnerable groups in project interventions, possible grievances from affected groups, and possible natural hazards. These 3 areas were reflected in the SES risk register as well as the project risk register with a number of mitigation measures to address these risks. Although no targeted assessments were required as a result of the SES screening, the mitigation measures foreseen the design of targeted outreach strategies to engage groups excluded by traditional job creation and entrepreneurship interventions, such as the targeting of people with disabilities and young mothers. These measures also envisioned the creation of a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) as per UNDP’s GRM guidelines and Social and Environmental Standards. Evidence of integration of active targeting strategies in the project approach or the establishment of a GRM was not available and a more detailed review of risk performance is provided in [Annex X.](#_Annex_VIII_-)
3. Overall, this MTE found no evidence of active targeting strategies designed or implemented by the project to include poor, vulnerable or marginalized groups in project interventions. On the other hand, the MTE found examples of gaps in targeting marginalized groups and locations that may require attention.
4. In Timor-Leste, only 62% of the internship and on the job training programmes provide a regulated stipend, while some are unpaid (31%) or the payment of the stipend is discretionary and/or unregulated (8%)[[19]](#footnote-19). The YEES Youth Internship Programme was therefore to be commended for providing a regulated and consistent stipend to the interns. Consulted stakeholders highlighted that the standardized costing model for the stipends of the interns was very welcome and can be improved by taking into consideration the challenges of interning in or coming from rural areas. The data collected for this MTE showed that the costing model favoured interns already based in the capital or larger municipalities where they were selected for the programme. Fresh graduates from remote locations had to travel and relocate to the vicinity of the host institution for the duration of the internship. For this, a USD 100 per month stipend was deemed not sufficient to ensure that interns from all backgrounds and locations could equally and effectively participate in the YIP.
5. Outreach via social media was found to be an effective way to mobilize young interns with a Facebook account and connected to the internet. While these represented the majority of the young graduates in Dili, in 2024, only 54.2% of the Timorese population were internet users[[20]](#footnote-20) and internet penetration was limited in rural areas and municipalities. Therefore, an outreach strategy relying largely on social media carried the risk of providing opportunities predominantly to urban youths and excluding marginalized communities. This was validated by stakeholders who found the outreach ineffective in ensuring youths in remote locations and with no internet and social media could also benefit from the programme.

# Lessons learned

## Lessons learned

1. **Nurturing the entrepreneurship ecosystems requires providing a diverse range of support to start-ups.** The YEES project demonstrates that start-ups need a variety of support services which go beyond financing and include financial management and literacy skills, support in navigating regulatory requirements, staff management skills, marketing assistance, market linkages, etc. These may differ from start-up to start-up and from sector to sector. It is important that entrepreneurship support acknowledges this diversity and tailors their services to meet the unique needs of each start-up in line with the sector they operate in and their degree of maturity.
2. **Women-led start-ups face unique challenges that must be addressed through a tailored and holistic approach.** The recognition that women face unique cultural, social, and economic barriers in starting and maintaining a business is essential in effectively supporting them and ensuring they can effectively take part in the entrepreneurship ecosystem. These barriers must be not only understood but targeted strategies designed to ensure women can develop and thrive as entrepreneurs, contributing to their empowerment and creating a more inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystem in Timor-Leste.
3. **Entrepreneurship and employment support requires a strong M&E system to measure impact.** While supporting start-ups and promoting economic opportunities is laudable, establishing clear indicators to measure their performance, sustainability, and outcomes (e.g jobs created or increased incomes) is critical. Moreover, the targeting of marginalized and hard to reach groups, either through active targeting or through the indirect job creation from entrepreneurship ventures, in the establishment of project performance targets, monitoring, and reporting is critical for gauging the effectiveness of entrepreneurship programmes in reducing poverty and inequality.

# Conclusions and recommendations

## Conclusion

1. Overall, the YEES project was extremely well received by stakeholders, and enjoyed great visibility and overall recognition of the efforts made in the country to promote youth employment and entrepreneurship. However, some challenges were identified, which led to an overall partially satisfactory rating, as per the conclusions provided below.
2. **Relevance** **/ coherence** - Relevance was the strongest feature of the project. The project strategy and theory of change were highly relevant to the national context, including the development priorities of the previous and current administration. It responded to the most immediate needs of the youth in the country and aligned its strategy to the problem analysis identified in the theory of change. The project was highly appreciated by national partners, direct beneficiaries and donors. YEES’ recognized value added was the ability to play a convening role among government actors, bringing together the providers of services for youth employment and entrepreneurship. However, some of the activities demonstrated limited internal coherence and alignment with the project overall strategy to entrepreneurship promotion. This created an opportunity to reassess some of the project activities to for a coherent strategy. The MTE noted that the involvement of the broader entrepreneurship ecosystem, particularly the private sector and larger companies, was not consistently integrated which reduced the transformative approach of the project in promoting private sector development. ***[Findings 1, 2, 3, 4]***

**Performance rating: Satisfactory – 3**

1. **Effectiveness -** The project made progress in achieving the desired results expected for the first 3 years of implementation. These, however, were not fully met, largely due to an imprecise target setting which measured the project against year 3 targets after only 2 years of implementation. Overall, the youth internship programme was particularly effective in providing jobs for young graduates. YEES was also making progress in providing youths with skills and seed funds to start their businesses. As a result of the elections and the political changes, the project faced delays in the establishment of systems to provide holistic support to employability and the continued implementation of the Soft Loan scheme. The project did well in identifying risks, however the implementation of the mitigations was intermittent and incomplete. The transformational effect of the project could not be assessed due to the absence of qualitative data on the job and the start-ups created by the project. ***[Findings 5, 6, 7, 8, 9]***

**Performance rating: Partially Satisfactory – 2**

1. **Efficiency -** The project used its resources as per project document, and financial delivery was consistently high (close to 90%) as per annual work plans approved by the project board. YEES demonstrated various degrees of efficiency across its interventions, with output 1 generating a higher degree of efficiency given that only 13% of the resources spent contributed to its results. The efficiency of Output 3 was further affected by the inefficient allocation of project staff capacities to support entrepreneurs. The perception of efficiency was further affected by the lack of qualitative parameters in the M&E framework to measure project results. The independent oversight by the project board can be affected by conflict roles among its members, where board members also played an implementation role. ***[Findings 10, 11, 12, 13]***

**Performance rating: Partially Satisfactory – 2**

1. **Sustainability -** The project has been able to support the implementation of important policy frameworks for SME development which contribute to strengthening the institutional ownership and sustainability of the project. YEES was set up to promote the formulation of institutional mechanisms to support employment services, such as access to job information, career services, etc. However, the long-term impact of the project cannot be assessed due to absence of qualitative metrics to measure knowledge transfer as a result of skill training, performance and viability of the start-ups, and the integration of ESG considerations in the support to enterprises. A long-term strategy may be required to strengthen the lasting impact of the interventions. ***[Findings 14]***

**Performance rating: Partially Satisfactory – 2**

1. **Cross cutting -** The project did not effectively mainstream cross-cutting issues in the design and implementation of its interventions. Gender targets were integrated in the project’s ambition and gender targets included in some of the targets; however, YEES did not integrate gender considerations in outreach and support to women entrepreneurs, making this area partially satisfactory. The project did not include a focus on social inclusion in its strategy to support job creation for youth through employment and entrepreneurship, and as a result, the MTE did not find evidence of efforts to implement an LNOB approach. The social inclusion area was not satisfactory. ***[Findings 15, 16]***

**Performance rating: Partially Satisfactory – 2**

## **5.2 Recommendations**

1. In line with the analysis of the findings and conclusions, the mid-term evaluation proposed recommendations to streamline the current phase of the project. A detailed description of the recommended actions is provided further below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Recommendation** | **Priority** | **Responsible entity** | **Timeframe** |
| * + - 1. Revise the internal coherence of the interventions by removing the bakery component, aligning the approach to business acceleration across all sources of funds, and designing an alternative strategy to access finance, should the soft loan witness further delays. *[Finding 2, 3, 9. Output 3 recommendation]* | High | Technical lead by UNDP, in consultation with project stakeholders, and approval by the project board | By mid-2025 |
| 1. Enhance the transformational approach to entrepreneurship development by establishing a limited number of funding windows aligned to selected value chains. These can be supported through targeted support strategies to assist in market and value chain analysis, production skills and mentoring*. [Finding 8, 10, 12. Output 3 recommendation]* | High | Technical lead by UNDP, in consultation with project stakeholders, and approval by the project board | By mid/end-2025 |
| 1. Invest time and resources to enhance the ecosystem approach by building strategic partnerships with private sector partners and companies to establish market linkages and provide support to entrepreneurs. Expand partnerships with schools and universities for career counseling. *[Finding 4, 7, 14. Output 2 and 3 recommendations]* | High | UNDP | By mid/end-2025 |
| 1. Revise the composition of the project board by removing conflicting roles between implementation and oversight. Consider expanding the membership to private sector representatives. *[Finding 11. Overall recommendation]* | High | Technical proposal by UNDP for approval by the Project Board | By mid-2025 |
| 1. Revise the project M&E framework to enhance the qualitative aspect of project impact, and the sustainability of the project. Integrate LNOB results in the results framework. *[Finding 5, 13, 14, 16. Overall recommendation]* | High | Technical proposal by UNDP for approval by the Project Board | By mid-2025 |
| 1. Develop a comprehensive and strategic approach to outreach and engagement of vulnerable and marginalized groups. Strengthen the project targeting strategy by analyzing the barriers to employment / entrepreneurship of the target groups and design an action plan to engage them effectively in project interventions and outreach. Consider leveraging successful experiences from other UNDP projects. *[Finding 16. Overall recommendation]* | High | Technical proposal by UNDP for approval by the Project Board | By end-2025 |
| 1. Effectively manage and mobilize project’s human resources to ensure technical support to entrepreneurs along the prioritized value chains. *[Finding 12, 10. Overall recommendation]* | Medium | UNDP | By mid/end-2025 |
| 1. Mainstream gender and women’s empowerment by developing and operationalizing an inclusive gender action plan to guide efforts in attracting and supporting women through all project’s interventions *[Finding 15. Overall recommendation]* | Medium | UNDP | By end-2025 |

* + - 1. **Revise the internal coherence of the interventions by removing the bakery component, aligning the approach to business acceleration across all sources of funds, and designing an alternative strategy to provide access to finance, should the soft loan witness further delays. *[Finding 2, 3, 9. Output 3 recommendation]***

It is recommended to revise the coherence of output 3, particularly the incubation component. All entrepreneurs funded by the project can receive a coherent level of support, regardless of the sources of funds from technical experts, by aligning the BIC and Seed Funding approaches into one strategy. Given the bakery activity has not started, it is recommended to revisit this activity and integrate its budget as part of a broader mentoring, coaching and market linkages support provided to all start-ups selected as per relevant funding window. Should the review and launch of the new Soft Loan schemes not be ready by year 4, develop options for the provision of access to finance for graduating start-ups. Consider partnerships with micro-finance institutions, financing institutions, UNCDF, or loan guarantee providers to support access to finance at a favorable rate for promising businesses.

1. **Enhance the transformational approach to entrepreneurship development by establishing a limited number of funding windows aligned to selected value chains. These can be supported through targeted support strategies to assist in market and value chain analysis, production skills and mentoring*. [Finding 8, 10, 12. Output 3 recommendation]***

In consultation with stakeholders, including private sector and companies, define and prioritize 4 or 5 well defined priority sectors / value chains for output 3. Use these areas as criteria to select, support, train, and mentor entrepreneurs and create market linkages. Given the size of output 3, design a plan to provide continuous mentoring and coaching to entrepreneurs, starting during pre-incubation up to the post-incubation phase, regardless of the source of funds and the geographical location of the start-ups and create linkages with the soft loan component. Provide end-to-end support to entrepreneurs tailored to each funding window / sectors and consider including:

* market analysis support as a basis to assess the quality of the business idea,
* market linkages and support in connecting with possible suppliers and clients,
* business mentoring and coaching, as well as
* production skills

1. **Invest time and resources to enhance the ecosystem approach by building strategic partnerships with private sector partners and companies to establish market linkages, and by providing support to entrepreneurs. Expand partnerships with schools and universities for career counseling. *[Finding 4, 7, 14. Output 2 and 3 recommendations]***

The project team can coordinate with the large private companies, the private sector and buyers in the country to assess market needs, jointly design technical support to entrepreneurs, and provide market links. Involve the Chamber of Commerce in an advisory capacity and in facilitating the creation of strategic partnership and enhance synergies to jointly deliver support to entrepreneurs. Establish partnerships with the Ministry of Education to expand the career counseling services in the education sector, to be provided earlier in the life of young people. Career advice and support can be expanded through and at the end of high school as well as at the beginning and through university and technical education.

1. **Revise the composition of the project board by removing conflicting roles between implementation and oversight. Consider expanding the membership to private sector representatives. *[Finding 11. Overall recommendation]***

It is recommended to address the possibly conflicting roles in the project board to enhance its independent oversight. Assign SEFOPE a role of board member (as beneficiary representative or development partner) and IDEA a role of Responsible Party only, with a project board observer / non-voting member. Expand the membership of the project board beyond government and public entities and engage beneficiary representatives (such as groups representing youth from marginalized or vulnerable background) and private sector representatives (such as CCI-TL).

1. **Revise the project M&E framework to enhance the qualitative aspect of project impact, and the sustainability of the project. Integrate LNOB results in the results framework. *[Finding 5, 13, 14, 16. Overall recommendation]***

Revise the project results framework with the objective to i) improve the output level indicators to ensure the appropriate level of ambition (beyond activity level results) and integrate indicators to measure the quality of the interventions and their impact on the life of the youths, ii) design an indicator methodological note to clarify the sources of data and how indicators measure complementary but different impact dimensions, ii) integrate a LNOB angle by providing disaggregated targets for the geographical areas and the target groups identified through the other recommendations. Reduce the ambition of annual and final targets, in line with the actual estimated length of the project or start preparing for a no-cost extension and ensure the remaining budget is sufficient to cover activities and project management costs through the additional year.

1. **Effectively manage and mobilize project’s human resources to ensure technical support to entrepreneurs along the prioritized value chains. *[Finding 12, 10. Overall recommendation]***

Consider realigning the distribution of the entrepreneurship development project team without major disruption to the management of the project. Enhance clarity and distribution of responsibilities to ensure coverage of all project locations for technical support, mentoring and coaching to entrepreneurs and support with market analysis and linkages. Map the feasibility of partnering with local CSO/NGOs and other local partners (such as CRS, volunteer organizations, etc.) in expanding production skills development support to entrepreneurs through hands-on knowledge sharing (beyond classroom-based trainings). This approach can be designed to ensure continuous technical mentoring, as part of a sustainability strategy.

1. **Mainstream gender and women’s empowerment by developing and operationalizing an inclusive gender action plan to guide efforts in attracting and supporting women through all project’s interventions *[Finding 15. Overall recommendation]***

To integrate gender and women’s empowerment effectively into the project, develop and implement a costed gender action plan aligned with the project's objectives and outcomes. Build this plan on an analysis of women’s barriers to employment and entrepreneurship, with the aim to enhance their participation and support throughout the phases of the project. Train project staff in gender and women’s empowerment, including PSEAH. Encourage the implementation of this framework through outreach and support activities. Take stronger steps in collecting and maintaining sex disaggregated data to measure the impact of the interventions on the quality of women’s jobs, livelihoods, and agency.

1. **Develop a comprehensive and strategic approach to outreach and engagement of vulnerable and marginalized groups. Strengthen the project targeting strategy by analyzing the barriers to employment / entrepreneurship of the target groups and design an action plan to engage them effectively in project interventions and outreach. Consider leveraging successful experiences from other UNDP projects. *[Finding 16. Overall recommendation]***

To integrate a LNOB approach into the project, further define the target groups of the project for an inclusive approach to job creation, targeting vulnerable and marginalized groups. Once the target groups and the geographical areas are defined, analyze the barriers they face in accessing employment and entrepreneurship. This can be used as a basis to design targeted engagement and outreach strategies and action plans for Dili and other municipalities while maximizing the participation from the target groups and those further behind. Expand the design and implementation of outreach strategies beyond social media, with proactive communication through printed channels, community radios, schools, public places, etc. to facilitate the participation of the prioritized target groups. Build on the successful experience developed by other UNDP projects in Timor-Leste, such as the UNDP Parliament project, and leverage their behavioral insights for more effective outreach and engagement. Take stronger steps in collecting and maintaining sex disaggregated data by sex, age, disability, location, and the impact of the interventions on the quality of their jobs, livelihoods, agency.

# Annex I – TOR

The ToR of the MTE can be found [here.](https://undp-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/personal/marta_lanzoni_undp_org/Documents/Timor-Leste/YEES/YEES%20mid-term%20evaluation/TOR%20-%20YEES%20Project%20on%20Midterm%20Evaluation%20(1).pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=9uw1zY)

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# Annex II - Evaluation matrix

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation criteria** | **Key question** | **Sub-questions** | **Indicators** | **Data sources** | **Data collection methods, tools and analysis methods** |
| Relevance / coherence | Are the interventions doing the right things?  The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to global and national needs, policies and priorities and those of beneficiaries and partner institutions and continue to do so as circumstances change. | To what extent is the YEES project aligned to the national development priorities, the SDGs, UNDP’s Strategic Plan, and CPD/UNSDCF for Timor-Leste and the economic, political and institutional changes that have occurred during the project timeline? | * Coherence between the project strategy as stated in the project document and national priorities, SDGs and UN planning documents. | * National development priorities * SDGs * UNDP CPD / UNSDCF * Local stakeholders | * Desk review * Interviews with stakeholders * Qualitative analysis |
| Has the project design included soundly formulated intervention logic, outputs, inputs, and indicators with relevant baselines, risks and assumptions to achieve its defined outcomes? | * Existence of logical linkages among inputs, activities, outputs and deliverables | * Project documentation * Project staff | * Desk review * Interview with project staff * Qualitative analysis, comparison |
| How relevant was the project design, approach and geographical coverage of the project for scalability of results? | * Coherence between the project geographical strategy and the project approach described in the project document | * Project documentation * Project staff | * Document review * Interviews * Qualitative analysis |
| To what extent does the project complement and leverage other UNDP projects in the country? | * Degree of complementarity of with other UNDP projects | * Project and UNDP documentation * UNDP staff | * Literature review * Interviews with UNDP staff * Qualitative analysis |
| To what extent does the project align and complement and leverage similar interventions by other development actors, both in thematic areas of the project and the geographical areas? | * Degree of complementarity of the project with other non-UNDP projects | * Documentation from external partners * Interview | * Literature review * Interviews * Qualitative analysis |
| Effectiveness | Are the interventions achieving their objectives?  The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across women and men, youth, people with disabilities and other groups. | To what extent were the project results achieved, and activities implemented as per intended outputs and targets set out in the project document? | * Level of progress towards the project indicator targets relative to expected level of project implementation | * Project documentation * Project Staff * Project stakeholders | * Interviews with project staff * Interviews with other stakeholders * Desk review * Qualitative analysis |
| How effective was the project in contributing to the employment and entrepreneurship of youths of all genders in Timor-Leste? | * Level of progress towards outcome level indicators | * Project documentation * Project Staff * Project stakeholders | * Interview with stakeholders * Interview with project staff * Desk review * Survey * Focus Group Discussion * Qualitative analysis |
| What factors, systems, and mechanisms have contributed to achieving or not achieving the intended results? How effective was the identification and management of risks? | * Level of documentation of and preparation for the management of project risks, assumptions, and impact drivers | * Project documentation * Project Staff * Project stakeholders | * Interviews with project staff * Interviews with other stakeholders * Desk review * Reflections with stakeholders |
| Efficiency | How well are the resources being used?  The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way. | How efficiently were the resources, including human, material and financial, used to achieve the above results in a timely manner? To what extent has the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective (e.g. value for money)? | * Level of use of human, material and financial resources * Planned and actual level of human resources available * Extent and quality of engagement with relevant partners/partnerships and UNDP/ UN projects | * Project staff * Project documentation | * Literature review * Interviews with project staff * Survey * Quantitative and qualitative analysis |
| To what extent was the existing project management structure including monitoring/quality assurance and results framework appropriate and efficient in generating and measuring the expected results? | * Adequacy of the project management structure and M&E framework | * Project staff * Project documentation * Project stakeholders | * Literature review * Interviews with project staff * Interviews with stakeholders * Qualitative analysis |
| How effective were the project’s management arrangements in overseeing project performance and ensuring the independent and impartial assurance of project results? | * Quality and adequacy of project monitoring and oversight mechanisms (oversight bodies’ structure, inputs, quality and timeliness of reporting, etc.) | * Project staff * Project documentation | * Literature review * Interviews with project staff * Qualitative analysis and comparison |
|
|
| To what extent are the project M&E framework and the data collected to monitor results effective in measuring results and includes disaggregated data by gender, ethnic group, disability, etc.? | * Level of disaggregation of the project M&E framework | * Project documentation * Stakeholders * Project Staff | * Desk review * Qualitative analysis and comparison |
| Sustainability | Will the benefits last?  The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue. | To what extent are the planned results of the project likely to be durable and can be maintained or even scaled up and replicated by UNDP and/or other partners? | * Measures established to sustain results over time | * Project staff * Stakeholders * Project documentation | * Interviews * Desk review * Qualitative analysis and comparison |
|
|
| To what extent do project’s interventions have a well-designed and planned sustainability and scaling up strategy? What could be done to strengthen the project’s sustainability and scaling up strategy? | * Degree of integration of sustainability actions in the project design | * Project documentation * Project staff | * Desk reviews * Interviews * Qualitative analysis and comparison |
|
|
| Cross cutting issues | The extent to which the project objectives and design integrates gender equality, human rights, people with disabilities, and other marginalised groups. | To what extent was the project approach effective in promoting social inclusion - particularly focusing on the marginalised and the poor? Were these groups consulted and meaningfully involved in project design, planning and implementation? | * Performance of disaggregated indicators * Stakeholders' perception | * Project staff * Stakeholders * Project documentation | * Desk review * Interviews * Survey * Qualitative analysis and comparison |
| To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project? | * Number of women actively participating in project design, implementation of activities, and monitoring | * Stakeholders * Project documentation * Project staff | * Desk review * Interviews * Qualitative analysis and comparison |
| To what extent has the project promoted positive changes of differently abled people? Were these groups consulted and meaningfully involved in project design, planning and implementation? What barriers did they face? | * Degree of inclusion of LNOB in project design and monitoring data * Stakeholders' perception * Effectiveness of feedback and grievance mechanisms | * Stakeholders * Project documentation * Project staff | * Survey * Desk review * Interviews * Qualitative analysis and comparison |

# 

# Annex III - Data-collection tools

## YEES Beneficiary Survey Questionnaire

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **English** | **Tetum** |
| **A** | **Self-identifier:** | **Identifika-an:** |
| **1** | **Sex** | **Seksu** |
|  | Female | Feto |
|  | Male | Mane |
| **2** | **Age** | **Idade** |
| **3** | **Disability** | **Defisiénsia** |
|  | Yes | Sim |
|  | No | Lae |
| **4** | **Ethnic minority** | **Minoria étnika** |
|  | Yes | Sim |
|  | No | Lae |
| **5** | **For which component of the YEES project did you participate as beneficiary?** | **Ita-boot nu’udar benefisiáriu husi komponente projetu YEES ida ne’ebe?** |
|  | As Job seeker looking for internship, skills, or connection with future employers | Nu’udar makbuka servisu ne’ebe buka oportunidade estájiu, abilidade, ka rede profisional ho empregador sira iha futuru |
|  | As Entrepreneur / future entrepreneur looking for skills, grants/loans, or coaching | Nu'udar Emprezáriu / futuru emprezáriu ne'ebé buka abilidade, fundus/emprestimu, ka mentoria |
|  | Employer looking for qualified interns or future employees | Nu’udar empregadór buka estajiáriu sira ne'ebé kualifikadu ka funsionáriu sira iha futuru |
|  | If employer: | Se empregadór |
|  | Type of business | Tipu negósiu |
|  | Number of interns hired | Númeru estajiáriu sira ne'ebé ita fó servisu ona |
| **6** | **How did you benefit from the YEES project? Select all that apply.** | **Oinsa Ita-boot benefisia husi projetu YEES?**  **Hili opsaun hotu ne'ebé aplika.** |
|  | I was placed as intern in an organization | Hau hetan knaar nu'udar estajiariu iha entidade promotora sira |
|  | I received career counselling | Hau simu akonsellamentu karreira |
|  | I received soft skill trainings to help me find a job | Hau hetan treinamentu abilidade atu ajuda ha'u hetan serbisu |
|  | I received a loan for my business | Hau simu empréstimu ba ha'u-nia negósiu |
|  | I received a grant for my business | Hau simu fundus/osan ba ha'u-nia negósiu |
|  | I receive mentorship and coaching to help me grow my business | Hau simu mentorizasaun no treinamentu atu ajuda ha'u dezenvolve ha'u-nia negósiu |
|  | I hosted interns in my organization | Hau organiza estajiariu sira iha ha'u-nia organizasaun |
|  | I participated in a job fair as employer | Hau partisipa iha feira karreira hanesan empregadór |
|  | Others: | Seluk |
|  |  |  |
| **B** | **Relevance** | **Relevánsia** |
| **7** | **How did you learn about the opportunities provided by the UNDP YEES projects?** | **Oinsa ita-boot hatene kona-ba oportunidade sira ne’ebe fornese husi projetu YEES-UNDP?** |
|  | Information from a government representative | Informasaun hosi reprezentante governu nian |
|  | Information from a government website | Informasaun husi website governu nian |
|  | From social media | Husi média sosiál |
|  | From a friend | Husi kolega |
|  | Radio announcement | Anunsiu Radio |
|  | Others: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Seluk |
| **8** | **Do you think the YEES program properly addresses your needs as entrepreneur, job seeker, or employer in increasing employment / entrepreneurship capacities?** | **Tuir Ita-boot nia hanoin programa YEES responde loloos Ita-boot nia nesesidade sira nu'udar emprezáriu, ema ne'ebé buka serbisu, ka empregadór atu hasa'e kapasidade empregu / empreendedorizmu?** |
|  | Strongly agree | Konkorda tebes |
|  | Agree | Konkorda |
|  | Neutral | Neutral |
|  | Disagree | La konkorda |
|  | Strongly disagree | La konkorda tebes |
|  | How? | Tanbasá? |
| **9** | **Do you think YEES properly addresses the needs of women, people with disabilities, poor, and minority groups in seeking employment and/or becoming entrepreneurs?** | **Tuir Ita-boot nia hanoin projetu YEES responde didiak nesesidade feto sira, ema ho defisiénsia, ema kiak, no grupu minoria sira hodi buka empregu no/ka sai emprezáriu?** |
|  | Strongly agree | Konkorda tebes |
|  | Agree | Konkorda |
|  | Neutral | Neutral |
|  | Disagree | La konkorda |
|  | Strongly disagree | La konkorda tebes |
|  | How? | Tanbasá? |
|  |  |  |
| **C** | **Coherence** | **Koerénsia** |
| **10** | **Are you enrolled in other employment / entrepreneurship facilitation programmes outside YEES?** | **Ita-boot rejistu ka tuir programa fasilitasaun empregu / emprezariedade sira seluk iha liur (aleinde YEES)?** |
|  | No | Lae |
|  | Yes | Sim |
|  | If yes, what are these programmes? | Sekarik sim, programa saida? |
|  | **Effectiveness** | **Efikásia** |
| **11** | **Are you satisfied with the way the YEES programme is being implemented?** | **Ita-boot satisfeitu ho maneira implementasaun projetu YEES nian?** |
|  | Very satisfied | Satisfeitu tebes |
|  | Satisfied | Satisfeitu |
|  | Neutral | Neutral |
|  | Dissatisfied | La satisfeitu |
|  | Very dissatisfied | La satisfeitu tebes |
|  | Comments | Komentáriu |
| **12** | **Are you confident that the programme will help you find a job, qualified employees, or be a successful entrepreneur?** | **Ita-boot iha konfiansa katak programa ne'e sei ajuda ita-boot atu hetan serbisu, funsionáriu sira ne'ebé kualifikadu, ka sai emprezáriu ne'ebé susesu?** |
|  | Very confident | Fiar tebes |
|  | Confident | Fiar |
|  | Neutral | Neutral |
|  | Not so confident | Ladun fiar |
|  | Very discouraged | Dezenkorajadu tebes |
|  | Comments | Komentáriu |
| **13** | **Has the YEES project brought any major impact or long-term benefit to you?** | **Ita-boot senti programa YEES lori ona impaktu boot ka benefísiu ba tempu naruk ruma ba ita-boot?** |
|  | No | Lae |
|  | Not yet, but it will by the end of the programme | Seidauk, maibe karik sei hetan iha programa ne’e nia rohan |
|  | Some | Balun |
|  | Yes, several | Sim, oituan deit |
|  | If yes, how? | Se sim, oinsa? |
|  |  |  |
| **D** | **Efficiency** | **Efisiénsia** |
| **14** | **In your view, what are the key strengths of the YEES programme?** | **Tuir Ita-boot nia hanoin, forsa prinsipál saida de'it mak programa YEES iha?** |
| **15** | **Can you highlight the key challenges you have faced in being part of the YEES programme?** | **Ita-boot bele fó hatene dezafiu prinsipal sira ne’ebe ita-boot hasoru durante partisipa iha programa sira husi projetu YEES?** |
| **16** | **The YEES program will be implemented until 2027. Do you think this program should be continued beyond 2027?** | **Projetu YEES sei implementa to’o 2027. Tuir Ita-boot nia hanoin programa ne’e tenke kontinua liu 2027?** |
|  | Strongly agree | Konkorda tebes |
|  | Agree | Konkorda |
|  | Neutral | Neutral |
|  | Disagree | La konkorda |
|  | Strongly disagree | La konkorda tebes |
|  | Why? | Tanbasá? |
| **17** | **Would you suggest the YEES programme to a good friend facing your same challenges?** | **Ita-boot sei rekomenda programa YEES ka lae, sekarik ita-boot iha belun diak ne’ebe hasoru dezafiu ne’ebe hanesan ho ita-boot?** |
|  | Yes | Sim |
|  | Undecided | La deside |
|  | No | Lae |
|  | Why? | Tanbasá? |
| **18** | **Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the YEES programme?** | **Ita-boot iha sujestaun ruma kona-ba oinsá atu hadi'ak programa YEES?** |

## Semi-structured interview and focus group discussions guiding questions

Introductory questions:

-            What is your involvement, role and responsibility in the YEES project?

-            How long have you been involved? Were you involved in the design process of the project?

-            From your perspective, what are the key results and progress? What are the key challenges for implementation and sustainability / scaling up?

Relevance / design:

1.        To what extent is the YEES project aligned to the national development priorities, the SDGs, UNDP’s Strategic Plan, and CPD/UNSDCF for Timor-Leste?

·        Can you mention national level development priorities, CPD/UNSDCF priorities, SDG documents that align with the project?

2.        Were the needs of target groups assessed and considered in the design of the interventions? How relevant was the project to the needs of target government institutions, private sector, and youth?

·        Who are the target groups of the project?

·        What measures were taken to assess the needs of the target groups and institutions during the design?

·        How was inclusion of their needs ensured in the project actions?

3.        To what extent is the project responsive to the evolving political, economic, institutional, etc. changes in the country? Have any changes been made to the project during implementation?

·        What key changes took place in the project’s context since its start?

·        What actions were taken to address the changes or evolving needs in the design or implementation of the interventions?

5.        Has the project design included soundly formulated intervention logic, outputs, inputs, and indicators with relevant baselines, risks and assumptions to achieve its defined outcomes?

·        How are the outputs interlinked? Can you give examples?

·        How are the interventions interlinked? Can you give examples?

·        How are the inputs interlinked? Can you give examples?

6.        How relevant was the project design, approach and geographical coverage of the project for scalability of results?

·        What is the geographical coverage, design and approach of the project?

·        How were they defined?

·        How are these aligned to the needs of the geographical areas and the country?

Effectiveness:

1.        To what extent were the project results achieved, and activities implemented as per intended outputs and targets set out in the project document?

·        What project activities were delayed from the original plan and why?

·        What activities were modified from the original plan and why?

·        What activities were not carried out in line with the results framework and why?

2.        How effective was the project in contributing to youth employment and entrepreneurship in Timor-Leste?

·        Can you give examples of how the project has or has the potential to lead to improved youth employment and entrepreneurship?

3.        What factors, systems, and mechanisms have contributed to achieving or not achieving the intended results? How effective was the identification and management of risks?

·        What were the major enabling factors and solutions applied that allowed for effective, timely and quality progress towards the expected results?

·        What were the major internal inhibitory factors that influenced effective, timely and quality progress towards the planned results?

·        What were the major external inhibitory factors that influenced effective, timely and quality progress towards the planned results?

·        What key risks did the project identify potentially hampering progress towards the planned results?

·        How have these been managed?

 Efficiency:

1.        How efficiently were the resources including human, material and financial, used to achieve the above results in a timely manner? To what extent has the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective (e.g. value for money)?

·        What measures were taken to use project resources effectively? What were the challenges?

·        What measures were taken for timely implementation of project activities? What were the challenges?

2.        To what extent was the existing project management structure including monitoring/quality assurance and results framework appropriate and efficient in generating and measuring the expected results?

·        Were there any changes in the project management? If yes, what and why?

·        Was the project monitoring plan duly followed? If not, why?

·        Were any changes made to the results framework? If yes, what and why?

·        What project management measures contributed to generating expected results? Give examples.

3.        How effective was the project in establishing national/local ownership?

·        Can you give examples of actions taken by the project to promote the local ownership of the project results by local actors?

1. To what extent do the project M&E framework and the data collected to monitor results are effective in measuring results and includes disaggregated data by gender, ethnic group, disability, etc.?

Sustainability:

1.        To what extent are the planned results of the project likely to be durable and can be maintained or even scaled up and replicated by UNDP and/or other partners?

·        In our opinion, are the project interventions and results able to sustain over time?

·        In your opinion, are the project results and interventions able to attract resources and attention to scale up?

·        What are the key constraints to scaling up or replication by other partners?

2.        To what extent do project interventions have a well-designed and planned sustainability and scaling up strategy? What could be done to strengthen the project’s sustainability and scaling up strategy?

·        Was a sustainability plan developed?

·        What measures were taken to ensure sustainability of the project interventions?

·        In your opinion, does the project have the potential for scaling up?

·        What can be done to scale up the project’s results and strategy?

3.        To what extent government, private actors and communities support the continuity of the project?

·        Can you give examples of support to the continuity of the project?

Cross cutting issues:

1.        To what extent was the project approach effective in promoting social inclusion - particularly focusing on the marginalised and the poor? Were these groups consulted and meaningfully involved in project design, planning and implementation?

·        What efforts have been made to ensure social inclusion and the participation of marginalised groups and the poor in project design, planning, and implementation?

·        What have been the results? What is the % of these groups benefiting from the project?

2.        To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?

·        How did the project actively promote the engagement of women in the project?

·        What are the key challenges related to the participation and empowerment of women identified by the project?

·        What strategies have been adopted to overcome them?

·        What could be done differently?

3.        To what extent has the project promoted positive changes of differently abled people? Were these groups consulted and meaningfully involved in project design, planning and implementation? What barriers did they face?

·        What efforts have been made to ensure the participation of PWD in project design, planning, and implementation?

·        What have been the results? What is the % of PWD benefiting from the project?

# Annex IV – Stakeholders

| **Stakeholder** | **Role in the project** | **Priority** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| UNDP | Project Implementer | High |
| The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) | Donor,  Project Board member (executive)  Primary beneficiary | High |
| The Secretary of State for Employment and Vocational Training (SEFOPE) under the coordinating minister for Economic Affairs | Project Board member (senior beneficiary)  Responsible party / implementer  Key partner in the implementation of output 1 and 2, on youth employment, internships, job fairs, skills trainings, and in support of Timorese in Korea. | High |
| The Entrepreneurship Development Support Institute (Instituto de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Empresarial – IADE) | Project Board member (senior beneficiary)  Responsible party / implementer  Key partner in the implementation of output 3, and in providing training, resources, and support to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) for growth and acceleration. IADE led the capacity development programmes and was part of the independent panel that selected the entrepreneurs. | High |
| KOICA | Main donor | High |
| Ministry of Finance (MOF) | Board member (senior supplier)  Secondary beneficiary | Medium |
| Minister of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) | Board member (senior beneficiary) | High |
| Entrepreneurship Registration and Verification (Serviço de Registo e Verification Empresarial – SERVE) | Key formal / informal partner | Medium |
| National Institute for Labor Force Development (INDMO) | Key formal/informal partner | Medium |
| Agência de Tecnologia da Informação e Comunicação (TIC Timor) | Key formal/informal partner | Low |
| Trade Invest Timor-Leste | Key formal/informal partner | Medium |
| Timor-Leste Chamber of Commerce | Key formal/informal partner | Medium |
| Bridge International (Korean NGO) | Responsible party / implementer  Key partner in the implementation of output 3, and in providing training and support to Timorese entrepreneurs in Korea. | High |
| Other organisations in Korea who can provide business development training to the Timorese migrant workers before they leave Korea | Key formal/informal partner | Low |
| Tuba Rai Metin (TRM) | Responsible party / implementer  Partner in the implementation of skill development component in output 3, and in providing financial literacy training. | High |
| Entrepreneurs/MSMEs, participants to the BIC and the Seed Fund competition | Primary beneficiary | High |
| Fellows and interns in the targeted municipalities | Primary beneficiary | High |
| Grants/soft loans beneficiaries in the targeted municipalities | Primary beneficiary | High |
| Potential employers in Timor-Leste participating in job fairs and hosting interns in the targeted municipalities | Primary beneficiary | High |
| Banco Nacional de Comércio de Timor-Leste (BNCTL) | Key formal/informal partner | High |
| Institute of Business | Key formal/informal partner | Medium |
| Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) | Key formal/informal partner | Medium |
| International Labour Organization (ILO) | Key formal/informal partner | Medium |
| Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) | Key formal/informal partner | Medium |
| UNIDO | Key formal/informal partner | Medium |
| Media agencies | Key formal/informal partner | Low |
| Academic institutions | Key formal/informal partner | Low |

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# Annex V - List of individuals or groups interviewed or consulted, and sites visited

| **Stakeholder** | **Name and title** |
| --- | --- |
| CO Senior Management | RR (Katyna Argueta),  DRR (Adeline Carrier),  OM (Ronald Kumar). |
| UNDP Senior Economist | Senior Economist (Artemiy Izmestyev) |
| YEES Project Team | YESS Project Manager (Hunjai Lee) and team |
| Bridge International | Mr. Jinsol Hwang (CEO),  Ms. Yesel Park (Manager of Social Innovation Team) |
| Institute of Business (IOB) | Maximiliana Col (Youth Hub Coordinator Dili for  Women and Youth Creating Our Future) and team |
| Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI). | Mr. Filipus Nino Pereira (Minister of Commerce and Industry),  Mr. Francisco da Costa Soares (Principal Advisor),  Mr. Antera Veiga (International Senior Advisor for Public Policy) |
| Entrepreneurship Development Support Institute (IADE). | Mr. Filomeno Marcelino Belo (Executive Director),  Mr. Aurito Rodrigues (Director) |
| Timor-Leste Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI-TL) | Mr. Rui Castro (CCI-TL Vice President) and advisor |
| Secretary of State for Vocational Training and Employment (SEFOPE) | Mr. Rogerio Araújo Mendonça (Secretary)  Mr. Joao Correia Pereira (National Director), team and Advisor |
| Tuba Rai Metin (TRM) | Mr. Mamadou Aliou Diallo (Managing Director of TRM),  Mr. Gregorio Francisco (Deputy Managing Director/Project Manager) |
| National Institute for Labor Force Development (INDMO) | Mrs. Isabel Fernandes de Lima, Executive Director and team |
| Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) | Youn Hwa KANG (Country Director),  Jieun KIM (Programme Manager)  Deputy Country Director |
| ILO | Richard Hanson (Programme Manager) |
| Beneficiaries/ participants of the entrepreneurship skills training | 9 beneficiaries from the Seed Funding entrepreneurship development initiative batch 1 and 2 |
| Beneficiaries/ participants of the Business Innovation Challenge (BIC) program. | 6 beneficiaries from the BIC 1, 2, 3 and 4 |
| Beneficiaries/ participants of the Soft Loan scheme. | 3 beneficiaries of the soft loan (2022) |
| Beneficiaries/ participants/ interns of the Youth Internship Program (YIP) | 7 beneficiaries from the internship programme (2023) |
| Ministry of Finance | Francisco da Silva (General Director) and Elson Martinho da Costa, and Advisor |
| FAO | Kyu Won Choi (Project Associate) and Project Officer |
| UNIDO | Palmira López-Fresno (Chief Technical Advisor) |
| UNCDF | Vladislav NIMERENCO, (Country Coordinator) |
| UNDP Governance CTA | Governance CTA (Bruno Lencastre). |
| Environment Unit | Gcinile NDZINISA and Gil Zairo from the Environment Unit. |
| Beneficiaries/ participants/ employers that hosts interns of the Youth Internship Program (YIP) | DDC-Timor Plaza  ALFELA  Tuba Rai Metin  ANCT  Community Housing Limited Lda |
| Ermera Municipal Authorities | Interim President of the Municipal Authority of Ermera (Mr. José Martinho dos Santos Soares)  Director of IADE Ermera (Mr. Júlio dos Reis Exposto)  Director SEFOPE Ermera (Mr. Cipriano da Silva)  Executive Director of Youth Center Ermera (Mr. Abrão de Deus) |
| Beneficiaries of the Youth Internship Program (YIP) in Emera | 6 youth participants of the Youth Internship Program (YIP) as interns in Ermera |
| Site visit on a local business led by a youth entrepreneur received the Soft Loan | Cornelio Gago (Owner of JAFEM, an agriculture business selling mushroom nuggets and mushroom biscuits) and wife |
| Employer of the YIP in Ermera | Julio de Jesus Gomes (Vice-Rector of East Timor Coffee Institute (ETCI)) and team |
| Liquica Municipal Authorities | Interim President of the Municipal Authority of Liquica (Mr. Fernando da Conceicão)  Director of IADE-CDE Liquica (Mr. Ivo Inocencio J. Alecrim)  Director of SEFOPE Liquica (Ms. Lucia Correia)  General Manager of Youth Center of Liquica (Mr. Tonisio de Jesus Vidigal) |
| Beneficiaries/participants as interns of the YIP | 4 youth participants of the YIP as interns in Liquica |
| Site visit on a local business in fishery, led by BIC participant | Jose Filipe da Silva Wolo (Owner of LALORAN TASI, a traditional fishery business in Liquica) and business partner |
| Dili BIC winner | Restaurant (BIC 2) |
| Dili Seef Funding Winner | AC maintenance (batch 1) |

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# Annex VI – Mission schedule

| **Time (TLS)** | **Meeting** | **Venue** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Day 1. Sunday, October 6th, 2024** | | |
| 06:55 | Arrival in Dili | Dili Intl Airport |
| **Day 2. Monday, October 7th, 2024** | | |
| 09:00 - 10:30 | Meeting with the CO Senior Management | UNDP RR Office |
| 10:30 - 11:30 | Meeting with the Senior Economist that provided oversight to YESS project. | UNDP B10 |
| 11:30 - 12:00 | Meeting with the YEES Project Manager | UNDP B10 |
| 12:00 - 13:30 | *Lunch break* |  |
| 13:30 - 14:30 | Meeting with the YEES project team. | YEES Project Building |
| 14:30 - 15:15 | Meeting with the Employment team of the YEES project | YEES Project Building |
| 15:15 - 16:00 | Meeting with the Entrepreneurship team of the YEES project. | YEES Project Building |
| 16:00 - 16:45 | Meeting with the Grants & Soft Loans team of the YEES project. | YEES Project Building |
| **Day 3. Tuesday, October 8th, 2024** | | |
| 09:30 – 10:30 | Meeting with the Bridge International | Bridge International |
| 11:00 - 12:00 | Meeting with the Institute of Business (IOB) | IOB |
| 12:00 – 13:30 | *Lunch break* |  |
| 14:00 – 15:30 | Meeting with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI). | MCI |
| 16:00 – 17:00 | Meeting with the Entrepreneurship Development Support Institute (IADE) | IADE |
| **Day 4. Wednesday, October 9th, 2024** | | |
| 09:00 - 10:45 | Seed Fund beneficiary | Beneficiary business |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Meeting with Timor-Leste Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI-TL). | CCI-TL |
| 12:00 - 13:30 | *Lunch break* |  |
| 14:30-15:30 | Meeting with the Secretary of State for Vocational Training and Employment (SEFOPE). | SEFOPE’s office |
| 16:00 – 17:00 | Meeting with the Tuba Rai Metin (TRM) | TRM |
| **Day 5. Thursday, October 10th, 2024** | | |
| 09:00 - 10:00 | Meeting with the National Institute for Labor Force Development (INDMO). | INDMO |
| 10:30 - 11:30 | Meeting with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) | KOICA |
| 12:30 - 13:30 | BIC beneficiary | BIC business |
| 15:30 - 16:30 | Meeting with the ILO | ILO office |
| **Day 6. Friday, October 11th, 2024** | | |
| 09:00 – 10:00 | Group Meetings with Ermera Municipal Authorities - President of the Municipal Authority, IADE Ermera, SEFOPE Ermera, Youth Center Ermera | Municipal Authority of Ermera |
| 10:00 – 11:00 | Meetings with beneficiaries of the Youth Internship Program (YIP) | Youth Center in Ermera |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Soft loan beneficiary | Business |
| 12:00 – 13:00 | Meetings with the employer of the YIP | School |
| 14:00 – 15:00 | Group Meetings with Liquica Municipal Authorities - President of the Municipal Authority, IADE Liquica, SEFOPE Liquica, Youth Center Liquica | Municipal Authority of Liquica |
| 15:00 - 16:00 | Meetings with beneficiaries of the Youth Internship Program (YIP) | Youth Center in Liquica |
| 16:00 – 17:00 | BIC beneficiary | Business |
| **Day 7. Saturday, October 12th, 2024** | | |
| 09:00 - 10:00 | Focus group discussion with beneficiaries/ participants of the entrepreneurship skills training. | YEES Project Building |
| 10:15 - 11:15 | Focus group discussion with beneficiaries/ participants of the Business Innovation Challenge (BIC) program. | YEES Project Building |
| 11:30 - 12:30 | Focus group discussion with beneficiaries/ participants of the Soft Loan scheme. | YEES Project Building |
| 01:00 - 13:30 | *Lunch break* |  |
| 14:00 - 15:00 | Focus group discussion with beneficiaries/ participants/ interns of the Youth Internship Program (YIP) | YEES Project Building |
| **Day 9. Monday, October 14th, 2024** | | |
| 09:00 – 10:00 | Meeting with Ministry of Finance | Ministry of Finances |
| 11:15 - 12:30 | Meeting with the FAO | FAO office |
| 12:30 – 14:00 | *Lunch break* |  |
| 14:30 - 15:30 | Meeting with UNIDO | UNIDO office |
| 16:00 - 16:45 | Meeting with UNCDF | UNCDF office |
| **Day 10. Tuesday, October 15th, 2024** | | |
| 09:30 - 10:30 | Meeting with UNDP Governance CTA | UNDP Building 10 |
| 11:00 - 12:00 | Meeting with UNDP Governance Unit | UNDP Building 10 |
| 12:00 - 13:30 | *Lunch break* |  |
| 14:00 - 15:30 | Meeting with beneficiaries/ participants/ employers that hosts interns of the Youth Internship Program (YIP) | YEES Project Building |
| 16:00 - 17:30 | Debriefing meeting | RR office |
| **Day 11. Wednesday, October 16h, 2024** | | |
| 8:00 | Departure | Dili Intl Airport |

# Annex VII - List of supporting documents reviewed

1. Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011 – 2030
2. Timor-Leste National Employment Strategy 2017-2030
3. Timor-Leste Technical and Vocational Education and Training Plan 2011-2030
4. Timor-Leste UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Timor-Leste
5. Timor-Leste UNDP Country Programme Document

ILO, 2022, Timor-Leste Labour Force Survey 2021

World Bank, 2024, Timor Leste Economic Report

SEFOPE, 2022, Timor Leste Enterprise Skill Survey Report

1. Digital 2023, Timor Leste
2. UNDP, 2023, Timor-Leste Briefing note on the 2023 Multidimensional Poverty Index
3. 2022, Timor Leste Population and Housing Census
4. ILO, 2023, Labour market policies for the youth in Timor-Leste
5. [DataReportal,](https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-timor-leste) accessed in October 2024
6. UNDP, Mobilizing social business to accelerate MDGs achievement in Timor-Leste
7. UNDP, Lessons learned from the SEEWAY Project
8. YEES Project Document
9. YEES Project Social and Environmental Screening
10. LPAC Minutes
    1. LPAC Meeting, 1 July 2022
11. Funding Agreement
    1. Financing Agreement with MTCI, 22 July 2022
    2. Financing Agreement with MTCI, Amended No. 1, 8 December 2022
    3. KOICA UNDP Grant Agreement, 22 July 2022
12. Annual Work Plans
    1. Annual Work Plan 2022
    2. Annual Work Plan 2023
    3. Annual Work Plan 2024
13. Budget Documents
    1. Combined Multiyear Budget
    2. Multiyear Budget: Government of Timor Leste Grant
    3. Multiyear Budget: KOICA Grant
    4. Multiyear Budget: UNDP TRAC-1 Fund
    5. Budget Plan 2023 and 2024
    6. YEES Budget Revision Slip, TRAC, 20 August 2024
    7. YEES Budget Revision Slip, KOICA, 20 August 2024
    8. YEES Budget Revision Slip, 17 July 2023
    9. YEES Budget Revision Slip, 4 October 2023
    10. YEES Financial Report 2024
14. Partnership Agreements
    1. IADE UNDP Letter of Agreement, 4 April 2023
    2. IADE UNDP Letter of Agreement Renewal, 20 March 2024
    3. SEFOPE UNDP Letter of Agreement, 3 October 2022
    4. SEFOPE UNDP Letter of Agreement, 9 February 2024
    5. SEFOPE UNDP Memorandum of Agreement, 5 February 2024
    6. BNCTL UNDP Memorandum of Agreement, no date
    7. MYSAC UNDP Memorandum of Agreement, 3 May 2023
    8. The Bridge International Responsible Party Agreement, 10 May 2023
    9. Tuba Rai Metin Responsible Party Agreement, 22 September 2023
15. 2023 YEES Organization Structure
16. 2024 YEES Organization Structure
17. Project Board Meeting Minutes
    1. Project Board Meeting Minutes, 5 December 2023
    2. Presentation for Project Board Meeting, 5 December 2023
    3. Project Board Meeting Minutes, 30 January 2023
    4. Presentation for Project Board Meeting, 31 January 2023
18. YEES Monitoring and Evaluation Plan 2023
19. YEES Monitoring and Evaluation Plan 2024
20. YEES Annual Report 2023
21. YEES KOICA Biannual Report 2023
22. YEES KOICA Biannual Report 2024
23. Annual Report to the Government of Timor Leste, Business Innovation Challenge 2022-2023, 14 June 2023
24. YEES Risk Log 2023
25. YEES Risk Log 2024
26. Compilation of 2023 Back to Office Reports
27. Compilation of 2024 Back to Office Reports
28. 2024 Procurement Plan
29. Micro Assessment Reports
    1. The Bridge International Micro Assessment Report, December 2022
    2. IADE Micro Assessment Report, January 2023
    3. SEFOPE Micro Assessment Report, September 2022
30. Human Resources Plan 2024
31. YEES Project Quality Assurance Report
32. YEES Project 2023 Results-oriented Annual Reporting
33. Briefing Notes
    1. Resident Representative Briefing Notes for Meeting with the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, 14 March 2023
    2. Resident Representative Briefing Notes for Meeting with the MCI Minister, 6 August 2024
    3. Resident Representative Briefing Notes for Meeting with the SEFOPE Secretary, 10 July 2024
    4. Resident Representative Talking Points, MCI Courtesy Call, 2 August 2023
    5. Resident Representative Talking Points, KOICA Courtesy Meeting, 2024
34. Output 1:
    1. List of all interns, Batch I-V
    2. Soft skills training manual
35. Output 2:
    1. Database of Training of Trainers Career Counseling, Participants Institutions
    2. Database of Training of Trainers Career Counseling, Participants Youth
    3. Handbook: Career Counseling Modules
    4. Manual: Career Counseling Modules
    5. List of Ermera Organizing Committee
    6. Training of Trainers Report
    7. Career Fair Activity Report
    8. List of Participants Career and Education Fair
    9. SIMU Web
       1. Inception IT Manual
       2. Plan to develop Job Portal Website
       3. Soft Copy Minutes Meeting on SIMU Web Use Acceptance Testing
       4. User Manual for Content Manager
       5. User Manual for Job Provider
       6. User Manual for Job Seekers
       7. User Manual for System Administrator
36. Output 3:
    1. 2023 Narrative Report with List of GYBI Participants
    2. Attendance List Ermera GYBI Training
    3. Attendance List Dili GYBI Training
    4. 2024 List of GYBI Participants, Classes 1-5
    5. Businesses returned loans to BNCTL
    6. Decree Law on Soft Loan
    7. Report on Soft Loan Scheme
    8. Soft Loan Beneficiary List
    9. 2023 SYB List of Training Participants, Class I-IV
    10. 2024 List of SYB Training Participants
    11. Value Chain Analysis Report, June 2024
    12. Final Report on Financial Literacy and Digital Training
    13. Financial Literacy and Digital Finance Attendance List
37. Satisfactory Surveys
38. Overall YEES Beneficiaries Database
39. Concept Note: Empowering Local Bakery to Improve Children’s Nutrition, YEES Project

# Annex VIII - Project results framework and performance matrix

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Output** | **Indicator to be evaluated** | **Baseline and target** | **Progress update as of Oct 2024** | **Achievement against the target** | **MTE’s own rating[[21]](#footnote-21)** | **MTE’s Recommendations** |
| **Outcome 1:** Youth become employed | 1.1 Number of young women and men becoming employed with YEES support | Baseline: 23  Target: 230[[22]](#footnote-22) | 99 interns are employed after their internship programme. | N/A | N/A |  |
| **Output 1:** Youth obtain skills, competencies and knowledge to be employed | 1.1.1 Soft skills training modules are fully developed (Number of developed modules) | Baseline: 0  Target Y1-3: 2 | 1 Soft Skill Training Module is accredited by INDMP. The training module for Youth is under revision. | 50% | Partially achieved |  |
| 1.2.1 Number of SSYS, SEFOPE, YEES personnel, and other relevant government personnel in Dili and municipalities who are trained and actively provided soft skills training | Baseline: 0  Target Y1-3: 40 | 0  ToT master trainers under recruitments | 0% | Not achieved |  |
| 1.3.1 Number young women and men who completed soft skills training (50 % female) | Baseline: 0  Target Y1-3: 360 | The project reported 0.  However, 239 interns were trained with pre-existing training materials.  (61% female) | 0% | Partially achieved | Despite the trainings were not conducted with the new modules, the interns were trained, and their soft skills were highly praised by the host institutions |
| 1.3.2 Number of youths with improved soft skill | Baseline: 0  Target Y1-3: 288 | The project reported 0.  Although the soft skills assessment tools are not available, host institutions found the soft skills of the interns higher than average. | 0% | Partially achieved |
| 1.4.1 Number of internship hosting institutions (employers) | Baseline: 24  Target Y1-3: 37 | 51 | 138% | Overachieved |  |
| 1.4.2 Number young women and men who are placed in internships (50 % female) | Baseline: 66  Target Y1-3: 360 | 239 batch 1 to 5  (61% female) | 66% | Partially achieved |  |
| 1.4.3 Percentage of interns who complete their internship | Baseline: 100%  Target Y1-3: 90%[[23]](#footnote-23) | 96%.  9 interns out of 239 resigned from the internship programme. | 107% | Overachieved |  |
| **Output 2** Service providers are available to deliver holistic support to enhance employability | 2.1.1 Information platforms connecting jobseekers to potential employers is fully functional (Number of information platform users) | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 5,520 | 0  Platform launched in demo form, not active to connect job seekers and potential employers. | 0% | Not achieved |  |
| 2.2.1 Number of SSYS, SEFOPE, YEES personnel, and other relevant government personnel in Dili and municipalities who is trained and actively provided job and career guidance services | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 40 | 56 trainers were trained.  Training manual and guidebook developed | 140% | Overachieved |  |
| 2.2.2 Number of youth beneficiaries who received services to enhance job readiness | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 3,000 | 408 youths trained  (60% female) | 14% | Not achieved |  |
| 2.3.1 Establishing partnership between job seekers and providers (Number of visitors registered for job fairs) | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 1,800 | 851 participants to job fair.  As per project document, 1-2 job fairs to be organized per year (4 municipalities). 1 municipality was supported. | 47% | Partially achieved |  |
| **Outcome 2:**  Youth become entrepreneurs | 2.1 Number of young women and men becoming entrepreneurs with YEES support | Baseline: 217  Target Y3: 900 | 236. same result as 3.1.2 | N/A | N/A | To be revised and further defined. Currently the project is measuring the number of entrepreneurs who receive funds, same as 3.1.2 |
| 2.2 Number of new enterprises established or supported with YEES support | Baseline: 52  Target Y3: 180 | 70 entrepreneurs received funds from batch 1, entrepreneurship training | N/A | N/A | To be defined and revised to capture impact level results. The definition of ‘enterprise established’ is not defined and currently measures the number of enterprises that received seed funds with KOICA’s resources, and it excludes results achieved with MCI’s support. |
| 2.3 Number of new enterprises surviving with YEES support in the first three years | Baseline:0  Target Y3: 30 | 0 because the project has been implemented for two years | N/A | N/A | To be revised to include quality dimensions. |
| **Output 3** Youth, including migrants/returnees, obtain skills, knowledge, and services to start or expand their business | 3.1.1 Number of young men and women who completed GYBI (Generate Your Business Idea) training (40% female) | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 1,080 | 677  312 attended the first batch, and 365 the second batch.  (43 % women) | 63% | Partially achieved |  |
| 3.1.2 Number of young men and women who completed SYB (Start Your Business) training (40% female) | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 990 | 236 attended the first batch of SYB training. The second batch has not taken place yet.  (41% women) | 24% | Partially achieved | To be expanded to include MCI and KOICA’s funded entrepreneurs receiving seed funds. Consider adding an indicator on the performance of the businesses. |
| 3.1.3 Number of young men and women who got additional vocational training to start their business | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 300 | 111 trained in financial literacy by the NGO partner in 4 municipalities | 37% | Partially achieved | To be expanded to include a quality dimension related to the knowledge acquired. |
| 3.1.4 Number of trainees who set up their enterprises or already have start-ups, completed IYB (Improve Your Business) training | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 120 | 0  No progress to date. | 0% | Not achieved | To be expanded to include quality dimension. |
| 3.2.1 Number of new start-ups or existing start- ups that apply for soft loans from BNCTL (50 % female-owned businesses) | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 180 | 79  (35% female-owned businesses) | 40% | Partially achieved |  |
| 3.3.1 Frequency of dissemination of information on trainings, resource availability, and market analysis | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 2 | 1 value chain analysis report developed | 50% | Partially achieved |  |
| 3.4.1 Number of bakery entrepreneurs, employees and children benefitted from bakery business | Baseline: 0  Target Y3: 1,012 | 0  No progress reported to date. | 0% | Not achieved | To be removed to improve the internal coherence of interventions |

# Annex IX - Summary tables of findings

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **Output** | **Indicator** | **Baseline** | **Baseline Year** | **Final Target** | **Target Year** | **2022 Target** | **2022 Result** | **2023 Target** | **2023 Result** | **2024 Target** |
| ***Outcome 1:*** *Youth become employed* |  | *KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:*  *1.1 Number of young women and men becoming employed with YEES support* | *23* | *2021* | *500* | *2027* | *30* | *0* | *100* | *70* | *100* |
|  | **Output 1:** Youth obtain skills, competencies and knowledge to be employed | 1.1.1 Soft skills training modules are fully developed  (Number of developed modules) | 0 | 2021 | 2 | 2022 | 2 | 0 |  | 0 | 1 |
|  |  | 1.2.1 Number of SSYS, SEFOPE, YEES personnel, and other relevant government personnel in Dili and municipalities who are trained and actively provided soft skills training | 0 | 2021 | 40 | 2022 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  |  | 1.3.1 Number young women and men who completed soft skills training (50 % female) | 0 | 2021 | 700  (120/year until 2026; 100 in 2027) | 2027 | 120 | 0 | 120 | 0 | 120 |
|  |  | 1.3.2 Number of youth with improved soft skill | 0 | 2021 | 560  (96/year until 2026, 80 in 2027) | 2027 | 96 | 0 | 96 | 0 | 96 |
|  |  | 1.4.1 Number of internship hosting institutions (employers) | 24 | 2021 | 50  29 in 2022 | 2027 | 29 | 0 | 3 | 39  (24 private sectors, 13 NGOs, 2 public institutions) | 5 |
|  |  | 1.4.2 Number young women and men who are placed in  internships (50 % female) | 66 | 2021 | 720  (120/year) | 2027 | 120 | 0 | 120 | PBM 12/2023: 171 interns (M: 67, F: 104), 61% female | 120 |
|  |  | 1.4.3 Percentage of  interns who complete their internship | 100% | 2021 | 90% | 2027  (108/year) | 108 | 0 | 108 | PBM 12/2023:  141 interns (M: 57, F: 84), 60% female  KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:  166 | 108 |
|  | **Output 2**  Service providers  are available to deliver holistic  support to enhance employability | 2.1.1  Information platforms connecting jobseekers to potential employers is fully functional  (Number of information platform users) | 0 | 2021 | 13,800  (2,760/year starting 2023) | 2027 | 2,760 | 0 | 2,760 | 0 | 2,760 |
|  |  | 2.2.1 Number of SSYS, SEFOPE, YEES personnel, and other relevant government personnel in Dili and municipalities who is trained and actively provided job and career guidance services | 0 | 2021 | 40 | 2022 | 40 | 0 | 0 | PBM 12/2023: 28 officers  (M: 18, F:10)  from Youth Centers, SEFOPE, YEES project, other government  KOICA 2024 BIannual Report:  29 | 0 |
|  |  | 2.2.2 Number of youth beneficiaries who received services to enhance job readiness | 0 | 2021 | 5560 | 2027  (1,000/year and 560 in 2027) | 1,000 | 0 | 1,000 | PBM 12/2023):  279 youth received career counselling (M: 113, F: 166)  KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:  182 | 1,000 |
|  |  | 2.3.1 Establishing partnership between job seekers and providers  (Number of visitors registered for job fairs) | 0 | 2021 | 3,600 | 2027  (600/year) | 600 | 0 | 600 | 0 | 600 |
| ***Outcome 2:***  *Youth become entrepreneurs* |  | *KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:*  *2.1 Number of young women and men becoming entrepreneurs with YEES support* | *217* | *2021* | *1,500* | *2027* | *300* | *0* | *300* | *236* | *300* |
|  |  | *KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:*  *2.2 Number of new enterprises established or supported with YEES support* | *52* | *2021* | *300* | *2027* | *60* | *0* | *60* | *0* | *60* |
|  |  | *KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:*  *2.3 Number of new enterprises surviving with YEES support in the first three years* | *0* | *2021* | *150* | *2027* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *30* |
|  | **Output 3**  Youth, including  migrants/returnees, obtain skills, knowledge,  and services to start or expand their business | 3.1.1 Number of young men and women who completed GYBI (Generate Your Business Idea)  training (40% female) | 0 | 2021 | 1,800 | 2026  (360/year until 2026) | 360 | 0 | 360 | PBM 12/2023:  312 youths  55% female  (M: 140, F: 172)  KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:  346 | 360 |
|  |  | 3.1.2 Number of young men and women who completed SYB (Start Your Business) training (40% female) | 0 | 2021 | 1,650 | 2026  (330/year until 2026) | 330 | 0 | 330 | Participants enrolled, not yet completed  KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:  236 | 330 |
|  |  | 3.1.3 Number of young men and women who got additional vocational training to start their business | 0 | 2021 | 600  KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:  625 | 2027  (100/year) | 100  KOICA Biannual Report:  125 | 0 | 100  KOICA Biannual Report:  125 | 111 | 100  KOICA Biannual Report:  125 |
|  |  | 3.1.4 Number of trainees who set up their enterprises or already have start-ups, completed IYB (Improve Your Business) training | 0 | 2021 | 200 | 2026  (40/year until 2026) | 40 | 0 | 40 | 0 | 40 |
|  |  | 3.2.1 Number of new start-ups or existing start- ups that apply for soft loans from BNCTL (50 % female-owned businesses) | 0  KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:  9 | 2021 | 300 | 2026  (60/year until 2026) | 60 | 31 | 60 | PBM 12/2023:  41  37% female-owned  (15 women-led, 8 new business, 34 existing enterprises)  KOICA 2024 Biannual Report:  42 | 60 |
|  |  | 3.3.1 Frequency of dissemination of information on trainings, resource availability, and market analysis | 0 | 2021 | 4 | 2026  (1/yr from 2023-2026) | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
|  |  | 3.4.1 Number of bakery entrepreneurs, employees and children benefitted from bakery business | 0 | 2021 | 1,012 | 2024  (506/yr in 2023 and 2024) | 0 | 0 | 506 | 0 | 506 |

# Annex X – Summary of project risk management performance

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of risks** | **Description** | **Impact and probability** | **Management action** |
| Political | Political unrest and humanitarian crisis | Likelihood = 1  Impact = 2 | The risk was rated low risk given the nature of the project. This risk materialized and led to delays, yet it was not updated following the results of the 2023 elections. YEES was flexible in engaging the new administration. |
| Social and Environmental | Timor-Leste is prone to natural disasters | Likelihood = 1  Impact = 2 | The mitigation measure included the timing of the activities to avoid rainy season and flood prone areas. This mitigation was not always implementable. |
| Organizational | Lack of coordination between projects working in the same municipalities in similar themes | Likelihood = 1  Impact = 2 | The mitigation measure included the creation of coordination to leverage complementarities with other jobs and entrepreneurship creation projects in the same municipalities. This did not consistently take place. |
| Organizational | Inadequate budget due to inflation and salary increments over the years of project duration. | Likelihood = 1  Impact = 2 | The project responded comprehensively to challenges in securing project staff due to salary scale for selected positions and the attractiveness of the consultancies. |
| Safety and security | Covid-19 Pandemic | Likelihood = 2  Impact = 2 | The risk was not relevant during the project. |
| Organizational | Corruption | Likelihood = 1  Impact = 3 | The mitigation measures provided an outdated HACT threshold, and this risk was being managed by following current corporate policies. However, the project did not design mitigation measures for broader corruption risks related to ethics, conflict of interest, etc. |
| Activity | Potential high dropout rates of skills training during the harvest season | Likelihood = 2  Impact = 2 | The project responded to low attendance to trainings to the extent possible, and additional mitigation measures may be needed (such as incentive system, recognition, etc.) |
| Activity | Exclusion of any potentially affected stakeholders, in particular marginalized groups and excluded individuals (including persons with disabilities), from fully participating in decisions that may affect them | Likelihood = 2  Impact = 2 | The mitigation measures included massive outreach to reach marginalized communities such as youth in rural areas or young mothers who are not able to participate in the series of training provided but are interested in becoming entrepreneurs or being employed. Community approach through PWD, women, and youth supporting groups will be also implemented to ensure no one leave behind. These mitigation measures were not implemented, and the project did not measure social inclusion results. |
| Activity | Grievances or objections from potentially affected stakeholders | Likelihood = 2  Impact = 2 | The measures included the establishment of a GRM as per UNDP’s GRM guidance. There was no evidence of a GRM for the project. |
| Social and Environmental | Sexual Exploitation and Abuse | N/A | This risk was added during implementation and the mitigation measures included the completion of PSEAH mandatory training by project staff, project staff have the same sex as those in need of the service, design/implement project activities in open spaces, etc. A number of these measures were not consistently implementable, due to the gender composition of the project team. Also, project activities in Dili were largely held in the project office. |

# A white sheet with text on it Description automatically generatedAnnex XI - Pledge of ethical conduct in evaluation

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1. [ILO, 2022, Timor-Leste Labour Force Survey 2021](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@asia/@ro-bangkok/@ilo-jakarta/documents/publication/wcms_863064.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [World Bank Group. 2018. Timor-Leste Economic Report, October 2018: Regaining Momentum?](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/c0149981-942c-50ee-86d8-6eec81f60777/content) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. ToR of Mid-term Evaluation of the YEES Project [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. ToR of Mid-term Evaluation of the YEES Project [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, June 2021 <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [UNDP, 2023, Timor-Leste Briefing note on the 2023 Multidimensional Poverty Index](https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI/TLS.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [2022, Timor Leste Population and Housing Census](https://inetl-ip.gov.tl/2023/05/18/main-report-timor-leste-population-and-housing-census-2022/) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [ILO, 2022, Timor-Leste Labour Force Survey 2021](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@asia/@ro-bangkok/@ilo-jakarta/documents/publication/wcms_863064.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. [World Bank, 2024, Timor Leste Economic Report](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/55296a24-5422-47e9-bb36-ccb63a7f92b6/content) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. [SEFOPE, 2022, Timor Leste Enterprise Skill Survey Report](https://timor-leste.gov.tl/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Enterprise-Skills-Survey-Report-2022_compressed.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. [Digital 2023, Timor Leste](https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-timor-leste)  [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. UNDP Independent Evaluation Office, [Assessing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment](https://erc.undp.org/methods-center/methods/data-analysis-approaches-methods/accessing-gender-equality) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The MTE’s rating are as follows:

    * *Overachieved:* the indicator is above 101% of achievement against the target
    * *Achieved:* the indicator is between 80% and 100%
    * *Mostly Achieved:* the indicator is in between 70 and 80%
    * *Partially Achieved:* the indicator is in between 21 and 69%
    * *Not Achieved:* the indicator is in between 0 and 20%

    [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The Project Document only reflects one MCI’s contribution. The second contribution of USD 800,000 is not included in the project budget and its impact is not included in the results framework. The figures in this table include both contributions and do not match the project document information. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Oct 2022 Project Board meeting upgraded the Soft Loan and Finance Specialist from NPSA-8 to 9. In 2023, the CO transitioned 2 Business Counseling Assistant positions from IC to NPSA-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. At the time of this MTE, in addition to the Soft Loan decree, an e-commerce decree (Decree 12/2024) was launched in early 2024, further enabling the SME support mapped out in the SME Decree Law (Decree 30/2023). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. This includes the start-ups operating in agriculture, agroforestry, aquaculture, fishery, horticulture, and livestock farming. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. [2022, ILO, Timor-Leste Labour Force survey 2021](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@asia/@ro-bangkok/@ilo-jakarta/documents/publication/wcms_863064.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. [ILO, 2023, Labour market policies for the youth in Timor-Leste](https://www.ilo.org/media/360466/download) [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. [DataReportal,](https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-timor-leste) accessed in October 2024. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. The MTE’s own rating are as follows:

    * Overachieved: the indicator is above 101% of achievement against the target
    * Fully Achieved: the indicator is between 80% and 100%
    * Mostly Achieved: the indicator is in between 70 and 80%
    * Partially Achieved: the indicator is in between 21 and 69%
    * Not Achieved: the indicator is in between 0 and 20%

    [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The UNDP Project Document does not include annual outcome level targets before 2027. These were however agreed with KOICA, in the Project Design Matrix and used as reference in this assessment [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The annual targets set in the Project Document are not aligned with the indicator and the baselines, therefore, this MTE used the % provided in the 2027 target as reference. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)